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## CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

#### PARIS.

THE Paris expedition had proved a brilliant success. Mrs. de Saumarez's pet hotel gave special satisfaction to every member of her party. Lady Molly praised the lively situation; Cressida the neat, tasteful decorations and ingenious arrangements; Alec the *cuisine*; and Joe the not exorbitant charges. The enforced economical habits of his youth had kept him from acquiring either the turn or the taste for throwing money out of doors and windows. As for the weather, they were enjoying a kind of Indian summer; but even when it rained, who cared, whilst the streets were so gay and well lighted, the population so happy-looking, so set upon making the best of life, and apparently so successful? Why, the sun was hardly missed before he began to shine again, and sadness and soberness had small chance of surviving in such an atmosphere.

The theatres were all open, and formed the favourite amusement of the party, Joe excepted. The performances, during which he understood next to nothing of what was going on, naturally

bored him to extinction, or to sleep at the best; he got off these entertainments when he could. Even Cressida had at last come to despair of ever effectually reforming his French.

Lady Molly was in Elysium. It was all new; it was all delicious—the shop-windows, the Louvre, the play, the opera, and last, but not least, the select little parties in certain higher diplomatic circles, where she and Elise had many connections and acquaintances. Still though so thoroughly diverting for a change, it was not the sort of life that appealed to her individuality, or in which she showed to the highest advantage, or that she would have cared to last. Playing outdoor games with her brothers, riding, skating, chasing the black pigs and the poultry, rat-hunting, and so forth—all this was infinitely better fun for a permanency, and, out of her native medium of English, exclusive, country home-life, her prestige and importance paled a little.

Joe was, or supposed he ought to be, enjoying it all like the rest. It was very novel and rattling, only a trifle too bewildering now and then. As when, for instance,

they were all in their box at the opera—a party of distinguished foreigners, the observed of all observers—and he found himself slinking in the background, awkward and restless. Or when the large reception-room they shared at the hotel was filled with Elise's visitors in the afternoon—British aristocrats, American plutocrats, hybrid fashionables, fluent attachés—never in his life had he felt so like a fish out of water. At such moments he was seized with a huge and impatient wild wish that he and Cressida could suddenly be transported back to the farm, or to Mavis Lodge, the quiet hiding-place ready and waiting for them at his favourite Seacombe. Ah, the effervescing life, constant variety, and novel tone were as pleasant and enticing to Cressida as they were uncongenial to him; so much he must feel, and an increased sense of the distance between them (had it somehow widened lately?) troubled him not a little. Fresh reminders to him of the existence in her of something that eluded his grasp; something invisible, intangible, but he knows that it is there, and goes groping about for it as we hunt for an object in the dark, stumbling and getting knocks for our pains.

Cressida found the atmosphere decidedly inebriating; it was one in which she delighted to shine. If she had kept in the background instead of exerting her cosmopolitan social talents to the utmost, she would have been practically shut out from the flattering notice and amusing intercourse of the swarm of friends that came buzzing round Elise and Lady Molly, all strangers to her, and to whom Joe, no cosmopolite, did not take at all. Then there were drives, there were plays, there were fêtes, there were excursions,

and the key-note was always pleasure—pleasure of a different sort, too, from that which was to be the butter to her bread throughout life.

Sometimes she said to herself that she wished Alec were away. Yet how much of the zest of it would have gone with him! He was at home here, felt his advantage; and though the charm of such distractions was not fresh to him as it was to herself, there was something infatuating in the present situation, and that was becoming more and more so every day.

Here was Lady Molly Carroll, with her youth and her fairness and her coronet and her Three per Cents—his bride that might be for the asking. It did infinite credit to his skill at sleight of heart that, with his divided mind, he should have gone on temporising so long without setting her distinctly against him. Adept though he was, the crisis must end, and that soon. Cressida knows it; he knows it, and that things are being driven on to a point when he will have to relinquish his double game.

Cressida's spirits, recruited by excitement, made her excessively charming to every one. Joe began to think that it *had* only been change that she needed; that the fresh scene and the fillip of this holiday-week were working wonders, which would prove the trip worth the bother; whilst for his own reward he looked forward to the quiet coming week or two at Seacombe.

When, for months past, had she been so lively and playful and talkative? when had her eyes shone so, her step been so brisk and elastic, her colour so bright and clear?

And when she and Lady Molly chanced simultaneously to express their fervent desire to stay another

week, it was *not* Joe, though he groaned inwardly, who vetoed the proposition. Elise could be very inflexible. She refused to listen, would not take the suggestion seriously, asked if they wished to settle down there altogether, as in that case she would think of it; but in spite of the light tone she assumed, it was clear that heaven and earth would not move her to consent.

Already, indeed, she had wished several times that they had never come. The expedition had been a false move, she saw, and might have foreseen, but that she had suffered her own private craving for the amusement of the trip to override her judgment. She had helped deliberately to checkmate herself. That match was slipping through her fingers—the match she had felt nearly sure of a month ago.

She might have managed ill, she owned, but then Lady Molly did not play her cards well, and Cressida was simply incorrigible. Lastly there was Alec, perverse and unaccountable, conducting himself one day as though tacitly protesting that he was only waiting for a look of encouragement from Lady Molly to place himself and his fortune at her disposition, and ever and anon, in chance ways, giving one to suspect that half a smile from other lips was worth more to him than the hand and the heart of the girl he stood professed to be wooing.

As to Cressida, Elise was posed.

A lingering regard, or rather feeling of *camaraderie* for one she had liked, had induced her to hazard some observations breathing advice. The advice in itself was good, though annoying, but the tone irritated, without leaving any other impression. Elise, who surmised now and then that there was a side to Cressida's nature

that had never been grasped by her, felt at sea when it came to things that could not be treated facetiously.

But to Alec, with whom she still retained some influence, she meant to speak on the subject, and speak home. She was not going to appeal to his 'better feelings,' or whatever these might be represented by in his composition—she would take the practical view, merely confine herself to facts, about which there could not be two opinions,—though he might become oblivious of this for a time, and not recognise his error till the day was lost. The girl had pride, her parents had pride for her, and it was a question whether the present situation could be tolerated a day longer.

She got him on the subject in just one morning, when they were alone, and then insensibly contrived to shift from play into earnest, hoping thus to surprise the truth from him.

'I wonder how long you think,' she said philosophically, 'that Lady Molly will go on like Patience on a monument—smiling at Indecision, as personified by yourself, Alec?'

'I never think about it at all,' he replied frankly.

'But you should, at least unless you are willing—to save yourself the trouble of making up your mind—to let it go adrift altogether. Sometimes I have thought that is what you really intend, and that for some reason you wish to set her against you.'

Alec made an impatient gesture. 'She was uncommonly sharp to me last night,' he said; 'I suppose I've offended her again somehow. Upon my honour, I—' he stopped short in his protest, uncertain to what he was going to commit himself.

'Well, I should say from my

own observation it was pretty clear how your case stands. That she may once have liked you, I believe, but on that very account is naturally the more piqued, and perhaps, as you suspect, alienated now.'

'What have I done?' said Alec, laughing. 'Did you represent me to her as a model of good conduct and all that? because, if so—'

'The Carrolls are not a strait-laced set,' interposed Elise mildly, 'as you very well know. Still I do not think it is good taste, and most certainly it is bad policy, openly to prefer Mrs. Kennedy's society to hers, as you so constantly do, without the slightest hesitation.'

'Do you mean to say that she is jealous?' he asked.

'O, no,' returned Elise judiciously, 'I do not think Lady Molly could condescend to be jealous of such a hollow relation as yours to an old love married and done for. In her place I should find such weakness and irresolution an effectual cure for any tender weakness. What girl would not be disenchanted at having it made so plain to her how unable you are to resist the amusement of paying unmeaning court in another direction? It shows you prefer another's play to her earnest. Of course the choice rests with you, but it no longer, I think, rests with you to put off making it.'

Alec looked neutral. Free to Elise to think her words had fallen on idle air. They had made some impression, though.

He suspected she was right: that Lady Molly's eyes were opened wider now, that an idea might be dawning on her that all this while she had been serving as a blind, an idea which, if once it entered in, his cause with her was lost.

Good-bye, then, to that inviting harbour into which he had once set his sails intending to steer. Had he not been a fool to palter and procrastinate? What had he got by it? An ethereal flirtation he must abandon now, and not look back. It might not be too late, but no half measures will serve. Lady Molly and the world. Has life anything to offer him so good as this?

When Elise's refusal was understood to be irrevocable, the only question was how to make the most of the days that remained to them. Their last night was that of the first representation of a new opera, *La Reine de Bengale*, one that Cressida had been specially desirous to see. But that, also, had to be given up. Alec's strenuous efforts to procure places for that evening had failed. Everything was taken in advance.

Mrs. de Saumarez and Lady Molly consoled themselves. They were dining with their friends of the Embassy. Alec proposed to join the evening party later on; he, too, had gone out to an early dinner with a Parisian acquaintance; so Joe and Cressida at the hotel had their evening meal *tête-à-tête*. It had been a racketing day. The party had been to Versailles and back, and Cressida, directly the outward stimulus of talk and stir was removed, relaxed a little, nervously upset, over-tired and over-strung. She had a headache, and Joe made her lie down on the sofa. It was early still, the whole evening was before him, and presently he asked if she minded his going out 'for a smoke.' It was an awful penance for him to remain boxed up in the precincts of the hotel, she knew; he writhed and fidgeted in a distressing manner. He liked wandering through the streets, if only for the freedom, open air, and escape



from drawing-room influences; so she begged him not to stay on her account. She was tired, and would probably not stay up late. Joe availed himself of his leave with much alacrity. He should go for a stroll, with his pipe, perhaps look in at the *Cirque des Elysées*, he remarked complacently, as he should be out without any of his fine friends, who might turn up their aristocratic noses at so low an entertainment.

Cressida felt she ought to be glad of the prospect of a few hours' solitude and quiet. She was conscious of the effect on her of the Parisian whirl, and that it threatened her with vertigo now and then, under existing conditions.

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,' was what she was now beginning to realise; and the worst awkwardness of it all is that the integrity of one's own soul is sure to suffer from the game.

She had had one or two proofs of that already, trifling but significant. Her old resolution, judgment, clear sight, true feeling, were embarrassed to a degree where they ceased to have power to regulate her conduct. She had yielded herself up to enervating influences, lost herself in introspection and analysis, till she seemed to have parted with perception of all sharp general distinctions, and was able to persuade herself at moments that black was white, or might be much the same thing.

There was that in her mood to-night that forbade repose. Quiescence and silence soon became intolerable. She paced the room restlessly, repeating to herself how glad she was that they were going away to-morrow, though the sudden imminent break-off was difficult to realise. But it did not do for her to get these glimpses of delicate pleasures, and self-expansion, and conquest in spheres that

could never be hers, and which appealed to her too strongly for her safely to trust herself within their attraction.

The click of the door-handle arrested her rapid train of thought. Alec de Saumarez entered suddenly, stopping short for a moment, rather taken aback to find her by herself.

'What, are you alone?' he said, surprised. 'I thought—'

'Yes, deserted, as you see,' replied Cressida, smiling. 'Joe has gone for a walk, to the circus or something. The others are dining out, you know. Why, what is the matter? you look so disconcerted and crestfallen.'

'I took for granted I should find some of them still. You know the desperate efforts I made to get the opera-box for you all to-night. At the last moment one has come into my hands, by accident. Baron Von Asten, whom I have been dining with, has given up his to me.'

'How provoking!' It was Cressida now who looked disconcerted and crestfallen. It had been the wish of her heart to go to-night. 'And now Joe has gone off disporting himself in one direction, Mrs. de Saumarez and Lady Molly in another. How vexatious!'

Alec's eye lit up with characteristic vivacity. He waited a moment, as if expecting her to speak, and then said,

'But you will go, I hope, won't you? You will let me take you there—' Then remarking the hesitation in her face, he added, 'Why, surely there can be no objection to that?' in a tone as of extreme bewilderment at the notion that there could be the ghost of an objection.

Cressida hesitated still, seeking about diligently for an excuse, an obstacle, and finding none.

'Do you think they'll be frightened if they return first,' he asked, laughing, 'and will think you've been spirited away? Because you can leave a line or a message to explain, and say where you are.'

She still seemed to demur. Alec's blank astonishment at it continued. Cressida perceived something strange and awkward in her reluctance. She had talked so much of her wish to be at the opera to-night, expressed her disappointment in such unmeasured terms. Her only objection could be to going thus in Joe's absence.

'He wouldn't like it,' was the phrase in her mind. How conventional, goody, childish, it sounded! A *bourgeois* idea—to Alec incomprehensible, probably.

And no doubt the natural thing would have been for there to have been no objection.

But the line previously taken forced her into a false position now; trifles took false weight, and she felt herself called upon to make much of an insignificant thing.

'Well?' said Alec. He was getting impatient.

'I'll be ready in ten minutes,' she replied.

'That's right,' said he, and went to see after the carriage, Cressida to dress for the opera.

It would have been silly to decline, she said to herself now. It was a little freak, and she was blindly bent on getting all the pleasure possible out of it. Joe couldn't reasonably object to it; and if he did, it would be too late, she would have had it; and if he chose to be angry she would only have the pacifying of him, which she would manage somehow. So vanish everything but her own present gratification! For once in her life she would do a wild thing (if it was a wild thing), be

reckless on her own responsibility. They were going home to-morrow—back to school, she said, laughing.

Soon she reappeared, an inimitably pretty sight, in a delicate cream-coloured fanciful costume of some oriental-looking material, with lace wreathed round her throat, and a sparkling aigrette in her hair.

Alec was waiting, the little *coupé* he had engaged was in attendance below, and they drove off, laughing at the impromptu escapade. Cressida, for her part, was not going to let narrow old-fashioned notions or grave reflections interfere with her perfect enjoyment of the present hour.

'It would really have been too hard-hearted of you to refuse to go,' he said, 'after the unheard-of trouble I've been taking all the week to get you the box.'

'I think it would,' said Cressida gaily. 'So if you like to believe I victimised myself, and consented out of purely charitable and disinterested motives, you may. Only I oughtn't to take credit for more than I deserve. I had set my heart, I confess, on seeing *La Reine de Bengale*, and this is our last evening.'

'Our last?' he repeated, with prompt and significant emphasis.

'In Paris,' she concluded. 'Don't say it so solemnly, as if it was to be our last on earth.'

'Well,' he said, 'when I remember what is hanging over my head, I feel ill, I confess, at the thought of England to-morrow.'

'So bad as that?' laughed Cressida incredulously.

'You should know why.'

'I?'

'At least you know what awaits me there—' He stopped, and then resumed: 'But I must tell you my mother will give me quarter no longer—no reprieve, she says.'

Again Cressida laughed. He demanded why.

'You amuse me,' she said, 'when you *will* talk of giving your hand to Lord Blackorton's daughter as if it were putting your head on the block.'

'Well, and no wonder,' he retorted. 'Isn't it worse? When your chances of heaven lie rather in this world than the next, you don't let go your hold of them without—'

They drew up before the opera-house at this moment.

It was a gala night, and the showy entrance-hall and staircase presented a spectacle of brilliancy rare even in Paris. A world of celebrities in beauty, fashion, art, power, wealth, and rank, native and foreign, were thronging in. The interior was full to overflowing with one of those dazzling audiences thirst for novelty can bring together. So many charming women—charming toilettes, at least—and so many famous men, or foremost men, as do not often come together under one roof. Yet even in this blaze Cressida was not overlooked. She puzzled people. She was not French, they saw; yet there was nothing specially English about her, and much on the contrary both in herself and her dress the very reverse of the typical attributes of the insular maid or matron. She was happy, elated, talked fluently and well, and looked bewitching.

She had said to herself when she decided to go that, being a stranger and with few Parisian acquaintances, her appearance there with Alec would pass completely unnoticed. She soon found it otherwise, as during the overture curious glances were levelled at their box from all parts of the house within view. Every one was straining to get a

better sight of that charming-looking young creature in white and diamonds and of that tall good-looking cavalier behind,—English, evidently, from his general appearance and deportment, but with a grace of address most Frenchmen might envy,—and whose numberless little attentions and exceeding courteous manner were sufficient to inform sagacious observers that he was neither brother nor husband to his fascinating companion.

So much admiring notice from outsiders was gratifying perhaps, but embarrassing. She drew back a little, shaded by the curtain, and talked to Alec. Then she determined to attend conscientiously to the opera, which had just begun.

She had really been anxious to hear it, but found an unaccountable difficulty in fixing her thoughts. Musical and artistic curiosity and interest slept, and eluded her efforts to rouse them. *La Reine de Bengale* proceeded triumphantly, but she was not deriving the least artistic pleasure from the entertainment.

She might plausibly lay the blame of it on the performance. The music was rather commonplace, the execution disappointed her expectations. The real attraction, the real success, lay in the *spectacle*, which was unimaginable. Indian temples, dazzling processions, armies of slaves, elephants, impossible vegetation, paradisiacal ballets—it was pagantry carried to its utmost extent, and overpowering everything else. But it impressed her like a childish pantomime. Even the singers were but glorified apes, and in the passions enacted she could see nothing but how hollow they were.

'You don't care much about all this,' remarked Alec, as the curtain fell on the second act. He

had been watching her, and perceived how forced and wearisome were her attempts to follow the performance.

'Well, don't you think it is rather too noisy and decorative?' she said, with a sigh. 'As to the music, I must confess myself very much disappointed. It may be my own fault, but—'

'No, no,' interposed Alec; 'I never saw such a piece of solemn rubbish in my life. Two long acts are quite enough, in my opinion. Shall we go now?'

She acceded readily. He put on her cloak, took her down to the door, where they had not to wait a minute for their *coupé*. Alec was a magician in these little matters. Never any hitches in a pleasure he had taken in hand. One thing at least he had learnt well—to play lord of misrule.

'Only eleven o'clock,' he remarked, as they went out; 'we can't possibly go back immediately. What do you say to stopping at the Café X—? Instead of a third act we can have supper there.'

Cressida remonstrated, 'Nay, I think we should be going home now.'

'If we do we shall find nobody in,' he expostulated. 'Besides, I feel that I've cheated you into the trouble of coming to see a stupid opera, and must make up for it somehow. What can I offer you by way of reparation?'

Supper at the Café X—, it appeared.

'Here goes, then, for a third act,' laughed Cressida to herself, as he gave the order to the driver and got in after her. She had accepted the frolic as such, and might as well carry it through now.

The supper did not detain them long. It was a sort of ideal repast—a fairy meal fit for Titania

herself; just a pretence for another half hour of *badinage* and repartee. As before, strangers' eyes sought them with marked admiration; and O, the politeness of everybody, the brilliancy, the ingenious luxuries, the stir, the exhilaration! It was divine!

When they got into the *coupé* again, Cressida overheard Alec's directions to the driver this time. He wanted a fourth act yet, then, to be represented by a turn up and down the Champs Elysées to prolong the drive. She objected as they rolled off, asking if it was not late enough already. Alec rallied her on her impatience.

'One would think the world depended on your being home by half-past eleven sharp,' he said, laughing. 'Is that the time at which you put all the lights out at the farm? But then we are in Paris.'

It would only make a quarter of an hour's difference, Cressida thought, as she let him have his own way, lingeringly reluctant herself to cut short their *tête-à-tête*. Scrupulous timidity cuts us out of half the delights of life. A warning Alec had applied early. His society was pleasant, too pleasant; she felt all this must be drawing to a close—Alec would have said, a climax. The depths of her nature were beyond his apprehension, or rather he read them wrong; but no one had ever understood the surface so well, so readily responded to her moods and lighter qualities, known so well how to please, to provoke, to touch, to inspirit—why not to infatuate? Whilst enjoying his mastery of her smiles and her *piquant* speeches, sweet or sad, he felt often as if enslaving her heart and mind in silence and secret. And then he would say to himself there was nothing the man whom she loved could not afford to give up for her.

'Can you wonder,' he said by and by, 'that I'm in no hurry to see the end of the evening? I'm told I may look on it as my last.'

'Your last!' said Cressida, echoing him mockingly; 'why will you persist in talking as if you were going to die?'

'Not yet, I hope,' he said promptly. 'Only, as you are aware, my mother has set her heart upon my marrying Lady Molly.'

'Do you not think,' remarked Cressida wickedly, 'that it would be a pity to disappoint her?'

'And she warns me,' he continued, disregarding the interruption, 'that I am running my chance there rather hard, or, in point of fact, ruining it as fast as I can.'

'Is it true, do you think?'

'It seems,' he continued diffidently, 'that Lady Molly has taken it into her head to be jealous of you. At least, she has been huffed at something, I'm to understand; and I suppose I may have given her cause, now and then.'

'It is very foolish of you,' remarked Cressida gravely.

'What is?'

'To offend Lady Molly. She is such a good creature.'

'Then your advice to me is that I should marry her?' said Alec, looking at her interrogatively.

She did not look back. Her glove was off, and she was staring down absently at the flashing stones in her rings.

'O,' she said disdainfully, 'please do not ask me to bid or forbid the banns. It is such a terrible responsibility, you know, for any one to undertake.'

'To be, or not to be,' said Alec, laughing suddenly. 'But I wish you would tell me frankly what you think of her yourself.'

'I've told you. I think she is a good girl; neither vain, nor frivolous, nor selfish, nor flighty, nor foolish—'

'Après?' said he.

'She is rich, of course, and stands high in the world. But why do you make me repeat what you know already—'

'Well, go on.'

'Isn't that enough? I've sounded her praises sufficiently, surely, even for you?'

'Yes; and now I want to hear her faults.'

'I sha'n't enumerate them,' said Cressida playfully.

'Not if I tell you; not if I want you to?' he urged, in the same tone.

'No. Either you know them; or if you do not, it means that they do not exist for you.'

'If ever I'm in danger of forgetting them, I've not far to look to be reminded,' he said, glancing into her face, lit up by a passing flash from a lamp as they drove by.

For in such moments Lady Molly would appear to him simple to monotony, downright to rudeness, rigid to awkwardness.

'Why don't you come out with them at once?' he continued; 'say she is brusque and cold, and impassive and literal.'

'Those are not faults,' said Cressida. 'Perhaps they are even advantages, though I grant you they seem to me to show a want of something.'

'Of what?'

'Of susceptibility to sweet things,' she said musingly; 'of taste, perhaps, when it comes to finer and delicate impressions—a whole side of life.'

'I wonder what a life would be like with that side shut out?' he said quickly. 'Whether worth having? You should know.'

Cressida was startled, discomfited, thrown off her self-possession for the instant.

He laughed, as he looked at her, saying insinuatingly,

'Will you tell me one can forget, or stop regretting, or even wish to? I thought there, at least, we must be agreed. For it was you who taught me how sweet some things might be, when you looked at me for the first time, long ago. That is the part of my life I should choose to have over again.'

'Ah, forget it. That is the best advice I could give you.'

'You shall *not* rob me of the recollection,' he said persistently; adding, 'If I'm to forget, you must put yourself out of existence first.'

Cressida, perplexed, said coldly, artificially,

'You should be wiser. Have not I been?'

'Then you mean that you're happy—satisfied?' he asked expressively; 'that you feel no want in your life? Your—'

'Hush!' she broke in quickly.

'You love him?' said Alec.

'He loves me,' Cressida replied wistfully.

'Are you going to make love the test of desert?'

'A fair test,' she said.

'So I think; but you don't count it so. Did you ever hear any one volunteer to break with the world for your sake?'

'Never,' said Cressida quickly. 'If I did, I should not believe him.'

'But if he made you believe him; if he gave you proof; took his chances in one hand and threw them away that he might hold out the other to you—'

Her lip curled slightly. 'Well, what then?'

'You would laugh at him, turn away, say he was mad, or worse, would you not?' said Alec, though not in a tone as if he thought it in the least. 'So you see love is no test at all in your eyes. Why, if it were, we should not be here now, nor ever have raised these

barriers between us,' he muttered restlessly.

Cressida's eyes flashed a little. 'Why will you harp on that? Let me alone. Do you know that you are saying wild things?'

'Am I? It is quite likely. I catch myself thinking wild things now and then—wishing such wild things as that you and I were in some far-away country, where it would be for me to make up to you for a dull world we had agreed to forget—'

Cressida raised her hand instinctively, with a sign imploring him to be silent. He obeyed, and taking her hand, suddenly raised it to his lips for a moment. The next minute the carriage drew up before the door of the hotel.

Cressida dismounted and went up the stairs alone. She came into the *salon* looking, as she felt, nervously strung up and excited. The agitated feeling was so excessive that it drove her to try and carry it off by an affectation of defiant merriment towards Elise and Lady Molly, who had just come in, and were there, awaiting their return—not in the best of humours with her, as was clear. After interchanging a few passes, veiled under the guise of polite nothings, Cressida flitted off to her own apartment, meeting Joe in the anteroom. It was half dark, but she became instantly aware of breakers ahead.

'Where have you been?' he said, with a sharpness of intonation that at another time would have struck her dumb. But insensibly she was prepared for something.

'To the opera. I left a message. Did you not get it?'

'Yes; I came in early, and thought there was time still to join you, and went myself. You had left the box already.'

'Yes,' said Cressida, beginning



to disentangle herself from her wraps. 'The music was stupid, so we went away after the second act; had some supper at the Café X—, and then drove home by the Champs Elysées.' She spoke with a gay unconcern; not natural, though.

'Another time you'll do nothing of the sort,' he said hastily. 'Pray did it never occur to you that I shouldn't allow you to go out in that way?'

'I did not think that you would mind,' said Cressida slowly, putting her hand up to her head with a vacant look.

'Didn't you?' he laughed oddly. 'Are you sure of that, Cressida? Take care what you say.'

Certainly she had better. Her going, it seemed, *had* displeased him intensely, and in this unaccustomed mood he was not quite himself, and hardly knew what he said. Only his rough manner and reproachful, masterful tones jarred upon her violently just then, and provoked her to retort coldly,

'I had no rational excuse for refusing what nobody could rationally object to.'

'You'll please to remember it's for me to say what is rational for you in such matters,' he returned, 'and not to decide for yourself again, since I see you are pretty sure to decide wrong.'

Cressida, in her mixed irritation and dismay, felt floored, and said deprecatingly,

'I am sorry I went, since you are vexed; but even now I do not, cannot, see that there was the slightest harm in going.'

'Well, and I tell you,' said Joe, with uncontrollable vehemence, 'that I won't have it, which is, or should be, enough. If you see no reason why you should not be seen alone in public places with a man who—'

Cressida laid her hand on his

beseechingly to stop him. Joe put it from him rather roughly, and turned away. Cressida sat looking wearily before her, somewhat stunned by the collision. Could it be this single incident, that she persisted in making out to herself to be trivial theoretically, that had metamorphosed him thus? She supposed so, for at the moment she was too bewildered to think. Her behaviour to-night had put him in a passion; to-morrow he would have come round, perhaps. But something would remain. That 'last' evening had left her feeling saddened, stranded, desolate.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### NUIT BLANCHE.

JOE, to whom serious mental disturbance was a thing unknown, his ideas and faiths, ever since he had any, having kept the even tenor of their way without an overturn or the threat of it, had sustained a sort of moral dislocation, painful past all telling, warping and injurious besides.

It had thrown his whole honest, kindly nature off the line—as he was half aware. Thrust into changed conditions, with no true recognition of or faith in his surroundings, he went striking wildly about, with futile endeavours to regain his lost balance and bearings in a reversed and hostile world.

Had any one told him beforehand that he would have spoken and felt to Cressida as he had done that last night at Paris he would have told them they were off their heads, or that he must be, or ever such a thing could come to pass. And what a little incident had done it all—a key fallen in his way that gave sudden language and intelligence to a

cipher he had been looking at for some time.

The next day his impressions seemed to him to oscillate between two extremes. A revelation that threw a light on every thought and feeling—stunted hope and made game of recollection;—or, a blank. Either of two things must be; that Cressida had been tampering with his confidence, repaying his unexampled trust with doubleness of heart—or else he, Joe, was a jealous idiot.

But yesterday the latter supposition,—anything indeed,—would have seemed more admissible than the first. To-day he no longer knew what to believe; thought wrong, saw wrong, felt wrong, as human nature must, under undue mental pain. Only a superior sort of mental heroism could have saved him from acting wrong, and, now judgment was nowhere, held him on in straight steering by dint of preserving a true feeling. Joe's heroism was of a physical sort. Dangers and injuries to life and limb he could have met without flinching. But that fortitude of spirit that leaves a man some forbearance and some self-government, even under heavy pressure, was a thing to which he had no pretensions.

They left Paris the next day—but by no means the same gay party that had entered it. Joe was taciturn and constrained, short with every one, impracticable with Cressida. Elise de Saumarez for once had lost her good-humour conspicuously. She had taken an opportunity that morning of intimating to Cressida how thoroughly she disapproved of her last night's inconsiderate escapade. Cressida laughed haughtily, coldly, and remarked that her notions of social propriety appeared to have narrowed very suddenly. It was a thing, indeed, Elise would never

have thought twice about, but for the threatening unfavourable reaction on her own designs.

Alec was outwardly cool and alert as usual, though the rising in his mind was quite equal to that in Joe's. He was more accustomed to such changes and chances, though; perhaps never more himself than when under them.

Cressida, between the two, preserved her outward grace and dignity to admiration; only she felt that her manner was artificial, her speech not spontaneous. As the day wore on Joe's mind underwent a sort of reaction. Cressida bitterly resented his outburst of last night. He had been so beside himself at the moment that he only half remembered what he had said and done. Perhaps she was really not so much to blame for what had occurred. There was a bearable conclusion presented itself now and then—though even that could not be come to without a pang; he hated to have to lower his standard of her. She was high-spirited, fond of admiration and flattery, might forget to think for a moment, and take for a small matter that of which particular circumstances made a thing of moment. Alec de Saumarez was a dangerous sort of fellow, and by no means such a fool as—to Joe—he looked. What could Cressida know about such a man, and the degree to which marked attentions on his part might become compromising in people's eyes? A trifling affair that would be a feather in Alec's cap would be a blot on Cressida's scutcheon. O, to be able to go and say as much to her honestly and frankly. But he was met by checkmate at the outset, since, so much once granted, it gave substance to other shadows of back knowledge—threatening clouds of infinite distrust that

blurred everything. He meant to take his own way to satisfy his judgment; to manœuvre, if need be.

Poor Joe—unused to intrigue, confronted by Alec's duplicity and Cressida's baffling reserve, and impatient to breakthrough both—had best have let diplomacy alone. His chance was that of an Indian going out with his clumsy club and spear against a volley of modern artillery. Or rather it was the Indian put to fight with strange weapons, laying about him at random, wounding himself and his friends without demolishing his enemies.

No Machiavelli. His extreme touchiness and intractability to her spoke for itself. His ill-disguised animosity towards Alec frightened her, and seemed to make frankness on her part both as to past and present fatally impossible. Now, as to the future.

That Alec would communicate, or try to, she felt certain. She knew, too, that if he meant to do it without Joe's finding out, Joe would not find out. It seemed to be clearly her duty to stop this, if she could. But the straight course that would have been so unmistakable some weeks ago appears to have broken, and between the deviating branches she is puzzled which is the right one to take.

After all that had passed previously, how could she, even with Alec's last night's confession in her ears, make the final break so rude and sudden as plain sense seemed to demand? Had she not done her very best to drive things to this hazardous pitch? She would have liked now to lead him to some safe place—part from him there—not seem willing to precipitate him with one hand the better to shelter herself with the other. She had taken a double part on her, and felt as if she

must play it through. But what safe issue can be relied on when your very virtues turn against you, and rebel at a too summary recantation of foolishness without a thought or word for those you have tacitly agreed to entangle in folly? Move where you will, you put yourself in the wrong.

The weather had broken up, and they left the yacht at Folkestone, where the party separated, De Saumarez remaining on board, awaiting a favourable day to take round the *Banshee* to her winter quarters. Elise was to deposit Lady Molly in her country home, before proceeding to London, and Cressida and Joe went on their way to Seacombe; Cressida had ventured to express a wish to give up this part of their programme, and go home direct. But the single effect of the suggestion was to displease Joe. Everything she said or did was liable to make him angry now—and nothing more than an attempt at persuasion. He seemed for the present to prefer to ignore the necessity for giving his reasons for things. It was his wish to take her to Seacombe, and unto Seacombe they should go. It was only after they had started that he mentioned carelessly that his lawyer chanced to be down at Torquay; that they had business to transact that admitted of no delay—and could easily meet from Seacombe, distant only half an hour by rail.

Their old quarters were ready waiting for them; Mavis Lodge, with every chair in its old place; not a leaf altered in the evergreen gardens. It was another life they came to take up within those walls. True the surface was smoothed over, and broken only by slight passing ebullitions, but the concord was not spontaneous; the collisions were.

On the third day Joe announced his intention of going over to Torquay. To Cressida's questions as to the matter of business in hand requiring his attention, he replied rather briefly, intimating that he did not choose to enter into the particulars now, but that she would know in good time.

His imperative tone and strange manner she felt wounding in the extreme, and her irritation showed itself towards him by coldness and a sort of sensitive shrinking. When he was gone a forlorn feeling came over her—her influence had deserted her suddenly—she could not appease him, nor meet him, nor direct or control the course his thoughts were taking, nor save herself from these exasperating consequences.

Then with a half-sigh she took out Alec's letter, one he had contrived to send, but that she had not yet been able to read.

He wrote from on board the *Banshee*—to tell her a thing or two. She had no right to be surprised at the news, but it darkened her perplexity.

The affair with Lady Molly definitely broken off. Elise indignant, but forced to concur. For the girl had gone home mortally set against her ex-lover, who, for his part, had long ceased to care for her favour especially. He was remaining with the yacht, that by this time must be at Torquay; and a few days hence he proposed to run it into Seacombe, where it generally wintered.

This was the sum and substance of his communication. Its very brevity disturbed her. If he had written at greater length and with less reticence she would have known better what to do.

Joe returned in the evening, tired and grave. He was uncommonly silent during dinner, but Cressida felt that some cloud

was impending. In the course of the evening, lifting his eyes from the newspaper he was not reading, he said, with a studied negligence that made the constraint more apparent,

'They say that that affair between De Saumarez and Lady Molly Carroll has suddenly been broken off.'

'Is it?' said Cressida impassively.

'You knew of it, did you?' said Joe, with rising harshness in his voice.

Cressida hesitated a moment, and then replied,

'I had thought for some time that nothing would ever come of it, myself.'

'He took you into his confidence, then,' said Joe, with a forced laugh, 'told you he meant to slink out of it.'

'I felt sure, from what he said, that it must end so,' she replied.

'Did you know also that he was at Torquay, and coming to Seacombe?'

'The yacht always winters here, I believe,' she returned listlessly.

Joe sighed. It was clear she was determined to say nothing, would not or could not go to meet him.

The next day they were out walking, and encountered Alec together with a knot of yachting friends on the little quay. A short parley was unavoidable. He mentioned that he was at the Royal Hotel for a few days, seeing to the repairs of his yacht, and let drop some conventional phrase about coming to call. If it was a feeler he put out, the manner in which it was received was sufficiently conclusive. Joe was a bad dissembler—even where the usages of society compelled him to hold in his speech.

'I won't have him here,' he

said, when they were out of hearing. 'Do you understand, Cressida?'

'I should think that *he* did,' she replied, with spirit, 'and that is enough. You don't seem to care what you do.'

'To him? Why should I?' Joe laughed. 'One doesn't stand on ceremony with low curs of that sort.'

Cressida flushed crimson, but remained resolutely silent. She foresaw that Alec, understanding, would less than ever leave without another word.

It came to her the next day. He meant to see her, he said; he must—and alone. He should just wait for the possibility, and take the first that offered. She was not to write; but might count on his coming as he had said.

Cressida was roused at last. This time she must stop him from keeping his word. Not for her own part. Her spirit rose up proudly and said, 'Let him come then. I too have something to say. What I write he might perhaps not believe; but he will believe me. And if I might make him understand better,—so that he may not go away hating me,—I might undo some of this harm yet.'

But a stronger impulse said, 'Your first consideration here is another. You may justify yourself to yourself. How will you to him? Is the moment one for you to demand scrupulous fairness, much less patience and implicit confidence? At a terrible cost to him will you go another step towards complicating a web already past your skill to disentangle?'

Joe was out. Cressida retreated to her own room and sat down to write her answer. The task was hard. She wanted to destroy their false relation and yet to seem consistent; to be upright with him and yet let him feel her indiffer-

ence. In plain words she wanted not to destroy his love and yet refuse ever to hear more of it. That could not be. So after repeated trials she forced herself to disregard this lingering half-selfish compunction—to think only of writing what would prevent him from ever caring to seek her presence again.

Absorbed in her occupation she had let time slip by unheeded, and Joe, who had returned from his walk, came into the room rather brusquely just as she had finished. Cressida gave a nervous start, but did not look up.

'To whom are you writing? he asked directly.

She looked at him, amazed, in spite of all that had gone before. Without heeding her reproachful glance, he repeated his question in a tone so overbearing that a spirit of insurrection bore down everything else in her. She met his eyes fearlessly, and replied,

'To Mr. de Saumarez.'

'I'll not have you write letters to him,' said Joe flatly.

Cressida rose with an air of impatience, and walked to the window with her note in her hand.

'You won't let him come here,' she said; 'well, I've something I wish to say to him. What am I to do?'

'I can think of nothing you can possibly have to say to him that wouldn't be better left unsaid,' returned Joe, commanding himself but indifferently, 'and I'm well aware what I'm about when I forbid you to have communications with him of any sort.'

'What do you mean?' she said coldly.

'I mean that he's a damned scoundrel,' said Joe violently. 'I know it now. And if you won't look to your good name in this matter,—I must.'

Cressida trembled from head to foot with wild indignation and excitement. No explanation could avert the battle now. Each was in arms against the other, bitterly incensed, and each would only forgive or be reconciled on condition of remaining master of the field.

She smiled, but her lip quivered a little as she said protestingly,

'But if I tell you it is important this letter should go,—that it is a letter I ought to send,—if I give you my word that—'

Joe cut her short, saying abruptly,

'Well then, let me see it.' A fair test to propose, he thought, and he added, 'Perhaps I'm the best judge of what it's fitting you should send.'

Cressida looked from her letter to his face disturbed by passion and harshness. She had written, unfeignedly, and firmly. A lenient judge or shrewd, impartial umpire might have seen in her letter her exoneration at least, and let the thunderbolts fall on Alec alone. Yet there was no telling what effect altogether it might produce on Joe in his present mood. In justice to him, to herself, to Alec, he had better not read it now.

'You don't trust me, this time,' she said.

Joe looked at her without speaking, and there was a moment's agonising hesitation.

'You don't believe my word,' she resumed, with vehemence, 'or else—or else you think I don't know what I ought, or ought not, to write?'

Still Joe said nothing.

Enough. Cressida crossed the room leisurely, put the note into the fire, then turned to him, pale, and with a singular expression,—so singular that it staggered him a little,—saying,

'As you please.'

The stone was set rolling. Let who can stop it now. It was not for Joe, in a tumult of bitter jealousy, resentment, and tortured affection; nor yet for Cressida, half-maddened by the treatment she had provoked, and bewildered by the sense, now fully realised, that she had walked into a treacherous pass from which she could hardly hope to thread her way so as to emerge *tête haute*, with flying colours without and peace within; forgetting herself too under the stress of this mortifying distrust and restless self-assertion of the arbitrary power of masculine will,—no appeal allowed. Something that whilst so easily enforcing instant compliance, put a good understanding more and more out of the question every hour; poor Joe blindly falling back on a line that would once have revolted him; setting to work to destroy his own dominion by perpetual emphasising it in outward visible ways. Let him make the most of what such a method can bring him: the outward and visible passive submission of a statue. Cressida is his. Yet two destinies had been in her hand, and she has done with them what she listed. But all power has a term, and of what shall come of her list to either of those destinies she is now no longer dictatress.

A day or two later some young yachtsmen they met in the town chanced to mention that Alec de Saumarez had left Seacombe. Somebody had been to call upon him at the hotel, and found he had gone off already,—started for London last night. Cressida heard it gladly at the moment, but second thoughts checked and perplexed her. It was much too good to be true.

The next morning Joe suddenly announced that he was going



over to Torquay. A friend had offered to take him in his steamer, and he should go. It was blowing a fresh breeze, an extra inducement, and they must start early. He hoped to be back to dinner at eight.

Cressida listened passively. An idea, a conjecture, entered her mind; an unpleasant surmise. She put it away. It might not be.

Joe that morning was troubled by a remote sense of compunction. Had he been a little too hard on her the other day? had he seemed too brutally suspicious and unreasonable? He had half a mind to say something to that effect,—some words, at least, more conciliatory than she had heard lately,—before he left. But he was in a hurry, the launch was waiting—he would put off talking, he decided, till he came back to-night.

At the moment when he wanted to wish her good-bye she was engaged with the landlady, and he went off without seeing her.

The morning was soon over. It was rough weather out at sea, and Joe's return could not be looked for before the appointed time. What should she do with those few hours? Stay at home and risk a possible conjuncture threatening her. She had it in her power to thwart it in various ways. There was Fan, whom she had never been to visit, but whom she knew to be expecting some sign from her, and whom, but for the civil war pre-occupying her, she would have sought out before. There were Seacombe acquaintances who would be glad to see her. But it was a wild afternoon, and she decided on remaining indoors. Was it not after all a most improbable apprehension of hers? Be that as it may, and in spite of Alec's alleged departure, she could not forget the word he had given.

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The restless feeling, half-doubt, half-dread, forbade her to settle herself to read or work all day. It grew worse as the afternoon wore on. She sat by the bay-window commanding the full view of the harbour below. She could see the boats creeping about, and the mast-heads of the yachts lying at anchor, the *Banshee* among the rest.

The sky took strange colours at sunset, then became thickly overcast, and darkness followed rapidly, with rain and squalls of wind. Cressida still sat mechanically watching the twinkling lights on the water. It wanted four hours still to Joe's return.

Presently she noticed a small boat creeping across the harbour. What made her eye single it out at first she could not tell. There were at least a dozen moving to and fro. As she followed the light it seemed to be making direct for the landing underneath the slope below Mavis Lodge. She watched it uneasily till it was hidden by the projecting hill-side.

Then her ear seemed quickened suddenly. She felt she was listening for something—a footstep, was it? Perhaps it was fear that made her presently fancy she had caught the sound. The wind blew so that she could be certain of nothing, but between the gusts she thought she could distinguish a distant tread on the gravel; some one mounting the steep zig-zags that led up to this, the garden side, of the house. Nearer and nearer. No doubt of it now.

She strained her eyes into the darkness, but could see nothing. Another lull, and she heard the footsteps quite close. For a moment she was seized with paralyzing fear; then an immense hope rushed upon her. It was perhaps Joe. The rain and boisterous wea-

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ther—for the harbour was sheltered, and the wind might be harder out at sea—had detained the steamer or determined him on returning by train. She did not know but what there was one that might bring him now.

She listened again. The step had ceased, but she thought she saw a figure move between the black holly-bushes exactly opposite. She could bear the doubt no longer, flung up the window, from which a little flight of stone steps led on to the turf beneath—and pressed forwards to make sure. The figure stood out from the trees, the light from inside the room streamed full on his face. Joe! No, Alec.

The moment she knew it something seemed to die in her. Fears and tremors were extinguished too, however. She stood there to meet him with an unnatural composure in which he could read nothing but desperation and soul-abandonment. He stopped an instant to reconnoitre—saw that she was by herself as he had supposed.

'Well,' he said, with a ring of exultation in his tone, and following fast upon her as she stepped back into the room, 'did not I tell you I should find a way? Is it well done or no?'

'How did you know I should be alone this afternoon?' said Cressida promptly.

'I saw the steamer leave the harbour—for Torquay, I was told,' he replied significantly.

'Where were you? I heard you had gone.'

'On board the *Banshee*. At the inn they believe I've left. I managed that very easily. Only my yachtemen know I'm here to-day. But I could watch this window from the deck-cabin, with the glass—saw you sitting here, and waited till it was late enough,

and wet enough, and rough enough, and I felt pretty sure you would have no other visitor. Then I came.'

'It was a wild idea of yours,' said Cressida uneasily. 'You might have been met—recognised. If so, your coming in this strange half-secret way will be the worst of all.'

'Did you think I should go without seeing you?' he asked incredulously.

'They said you were gone,' she replied. 'From that I hoped you had given up all idea of it. It was reckless of you to try.'

'I know, I know,' he said impatiently; 'but who cares for that now, since I have succeeded at last, as I said I would? Wasn't it well done?'

His eye was wild and eager, his colour changed rapidly, there was a novel animation about his manner, a frank, determined, fearless spirit that redeemed him from scorn just then and raised in her a darker self-reproach. This man, desertless, irreclaimable though he might be, had a soul—and it seemed to her as if it might rise up in judgment on hers now, and condemn it.

She felt no fear of him, no more than of herself. For their two sakes it was best that he should see her this once more.

'Sit down,' she said, rather faintly, 'since you have come. I thought it just possible, but trusted you would not risk it.'

He dashed down his cap—laughed to find his hair all wet with the rain.

'As to being seen,' he said, 'that would be difficult; it's dark as pitch out there on the water. But had I come through the town the chances are some one would have recognised me. Besides, as to preferring your garden way, and coming on you unannounced, I've

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\*She could bear the doubt no longer, flung up the window, &c.

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no choice but to take the law into my own hands. Your house is forbidden me—and if I'm to see you I must manage it so that no one but yourself shall be the wiser.'

'You know the difficulties in the way of meeting now,' she began hesitatingly; 'it is not in my power to alter that.'

Alec nodded. 'Difficulties? you mean impossibilities. I've proof enough—fresh proof to-day if it was wanted.'

'What can you mean?' she asked anxiously.

'This,' he said, 'it's a trifle—but speaks volumes, I think. It was a money affair, a matter of a loan—an arrangement I entered into last winter, and of which, perhaps, you never heard—'

'Yes, yes,' she said impatiently; 'go on.'

'Well, it has been cancelled suddenly, paid off. The whole sum passed into my lawyer's hands yesterday.'

Cressida's countenance changed. Once again the perception was forced on her of what a thin partition there was, and there long had been, between her and the gaping sea.

She wondered now that she had not thought more of this—a matter that, for her, had faded into remote insignificance, but that must these last few days have rankled like poison in Joe's mind. How scantily she had taken into account the disturbance and suffering she was putting him through. Alec saw on her face that she was deeply troubled—but it raised no misgivings of the right kind.

'So you see there was really nothing for it,' he continued presently, 'but to do as I've done, come to you by sea as I mayn't by land, and go scaling the slopes of your garden in this knight-errant sort of fashion. Why, if

others had their way, to tyrannise as they chose, we should have been separated for ever, before we knew.'

'There is no other way,' said Cressida in a low, steady voice. Her eyes fell; she bent down her head, and he could not see her face.

'You say so, but can you believe it really?' continued Alec rapidly. 'Anything, I grant you, is better than to be spied upon, dogged, baffled, and cheated out of exchanging a word. But there might be better for both of us than you or I have found yet; I know it; ah, and so do you,' he urged, with the gaining earnestness of a passionate feeling he no longer exerted himself to conceal. Repression would not serve him now; but daring fervour has been known to sweep away scruples of all sorts before it.

Alec was not a fiend. His villany was on the whole of a spontaneous, commonplace order. If there was an element of calculation underlying his stormiest proceedings he was apt to forget it in the action. His mind now was full of the idea that he had come to compass Cressida's happiness, not her misery. If things stood so that she could only achieve her escape from an irksome lot by absolute renunciation of every other tie she had ever formed, why not urge her on to this? What pleasure could there be in her life now, exposed to the rudeness—brutality in Alec's idea—of one at the best ridiculously incapable of comprehending her delicate nature and ministering to her subtler feelings?

That Cressida, in her right mind, should consent to take this course, as the one most alluring to herself, was not absolutely inconceivable from Alec's point of view—there was now the infatuation

of the moment to help to carry her away into giving her consent blindfold to any desperate scheme he should propose. She would act in haste, place her future in his hands. It would be his part not to let her repent after, and that he vowed never to do.

For the real tie that bound Cressida to Joe,—the tie of clinging affection, born out of gratitude, generous sympathies, mutual associations, interests, and obligations, the bond of lives and hopes united, the thousand fine threads that make a cord of all cords the worst to be broken,—it did not enter into his comprehension. Cressida herself had hardly been conscious of its full strength till now, when, as Alec went on talking, and her imagination was dragged along to keep pace with his, it all served but to bring home to her more vividly how to snap that cord would be as easy and pleasant as to tear up her own life at the roots.

‘Should we mind anything, then?’ he was saying. ‘Should we care for the good words or opinion of outsiders? Let people say their worst, they could not part us. We have waited long enough already. Why did we ever let the world come between us? Cressida, I think we were just mad in those days—’

‘Don’t talk of them,’ she interrupted.

‘True, they are over, but we—aren’t we here, and the same? Haven’t we our youth to spend? If we lost our way once we can make up for it yet. You doubted me still the other day, I saw, but I’ve broken away from everything that hampered me—freely—for I never asked for a word from you then.’

He was asking it now; claiming it too. He stood up and leaned back against the marble fireplace facing her in silence.

As usual under the pressure of mental excitement, the vivid, irresistible, expressive soul-beauty of Cressida’s countenance was heightened to the utmost. Such a face as has done strange work in men’s minds again and again, mastered the fear of death, the love of fortune, the superstitions of honour. As Alec stood looking at her now, all the scattered, squandered, rusted, worn forces of his being seemed to be reawakening, gathering, and concentrating themselves on this one last, best enterprise of genuine passion, against which all else seemed mere chaff.

Cressida was speechless. Words, plenty of them, rushed to her lips, but hard reason drove them back. Talk to such a man of social laws he has never owned or obeyed; of divine ordinances in which he does not believe; of compunction, truth, generosity, rectitude, when he has long quenched their light within him; of ‘others’ when he knows only of a self to serve.

Mockery. Worse. To him, and from her, hypocrisy. He has never made any pretence of goodness—never appealed to her sympathy on that score. How can she affect ignorance, and appeal to a dead virtue in him whom she has well known all along what he is, and also, what he is not?

She must be sorry for him in this moment. She has done him wrong. Nothing can alter that. Her look was sad and remorseful, but there was none of the tenderness in it that he sought, as she replied with a fixed calmness that took him utterly aback,

‘Alec, I let you come to-day, but it was the better to make an end. You know you’ve made open friendship impossible. From that moment it was impossible you and I should ever have anything more to do with one another.’



'Who says so?' he exclaimed impetuously. 'A world you don't care for, any more than myself—and that we aren't bound to obey—or to reckon with. Who says so? Not I.'

'I do,' said Cressida, in the same tone. 'And—' she added distantly, with penetrating accent and significance, 'never could we have been everything to each other.'

Her tone, more than her words, brought Alec to himself, struck him with doubt and mistrust. He felt his moorings giving way.

Cressida, overcome by a burning sense of shame, sought in vain for the proud words she wanted. But she was master of her tone and let that speak.

'You have misunderstood me terribly,' she continued, 'if you ever thought—'

'*Ever thought*,' repeated Alec, with a ring of irony that struck sharply on her ears, 'thought, Cressida?'

'That your love could ever make me so utterly false and treacherous, and forgetful as to—accept it,' she pursued unfalteringly.

'Are you telling me this in earnest?' he said agitatedly, and coming nearer to her. 'No no—I understand—you—you haven't the courage to defy—public opinion—and the contempt of fools, loss of what they call position—and you give the other reason. But the happier the position, the higher the position in reality—and if that's what you are afraid of, I—'

'I meant what I said,' she interrupted, growing colder and more distant under his searching gaze. 'It is the absolute truth. If I've led you to think otherwise—as I see I have—I am sorry—but I've paid for it now, dearly,' she added with a flash of vehemence, 'in having had to sit and listen pa-

tiently and hear all this from you.'

'Having to listen—having to hear!' repeated Alec, stupefied. 'Impossible—what is it that you're saying to me? Women are false I know, but not so false as that. Eyes tell lies for once, but not over and over again. Men deceive sometimes, but not in that cold fashion. At least there's something in them—in me—that's not hard and hollow and insincere—' he stopped, recovered himself with an effort. Cressida drooped her head and let fall something inaudible—he caught the word 'Un-generous.'

'At least,' he concluded incisively, 'when men make love, they mean it.'

'Say what you like,' said Cressida proudly, 'for it seems I've given you the right—a right you mean to make use of—to heap all these bitter taunts upon me for what indeed was not meant in injury—' a sob she could not check broke through her voice and stifled it.

'No no, forgive me,' he exclaimed, repentant. 'I—I forgot myself just now—but you don't know, don't care what you are doing to me.'

The agitation that betrayed itself in his face, voice, frame, in spite of his attempts to disguise it, touched her. She knew his love's worth exactly—and that it was small. Shallow, short-lived, and so far fallacious; yet so far true that just then, if she had stood on one side and all the kingdoms of the earth on the other, he would have followed her, without looking back.

'I have been fearfully wrong,' she said slowly, 'and deserve to suffer, as something tells me I shall, more than you. One day you will forgive me, Alec, sooner than I shall forgive myself. You

know everything now, and how your being here at this moment pains me as the worst conviction of my wild selfishness. After this we can never meet again with my free will—and if,’ she urged intently, ‘in all this love of yours there has been from first to last one spark of generous feeling, you will leave this place to-night, and leave me now.’

Alec looked at her in silence—tossed about with clashing emotions—hardly accountable for his words, to say the least. He understood now how men had murdered women they were fond of. He could have knelt to her on one impulse and strangled her upon another. Bitterness was uppermost and the leaving speech that hung on his lips was little fond. Yet the resolute calm of her manner was gaining on him, by degrees—these wild feelings abated, leaving him inert, bewildered, and pliant.

She had conquered. He must leave her for this time, for always if need be. She could make him.

She rose. Alec mechanically laid his hand on his cap, and she went a few steps towards the window and stood silently, but with grave entreaty in her countenance urging him not to linger. How the wind was blowing outside—sweeping through the half-raised window. Alec, as he passed, without looking at her, wrung her hand—cold and dead in his grasp—and was going to obey, when a startled exclamation from Cressida arrested him; he stood still to listen.

Between the gusts of wind a heavy tread was distinctly heard on the soaked gravel, mounting the terraces.

‘Kennedy. Curse him,’ muttered Alec to himself. His first impulse was to turn back, to pass through into the hall and let him-

self out of the house by the front entrance into the road—the work of a moment—and thus avoid a meeting. He made a hasty instinctive movement towards the drawing-room door. Cressida stopped him.

‘Are you mad?’ she exclaimed. ‘If I haven’t prevented your coming, at least you shall not leave now in that underhand way.’ Alec hesitated; recollecting, however, what Cressida had forgotten: that his boat might have already been noticed at the landing. ‘Do you suppose I want to keep from him that you’ve been here?’ she continued, with animation. ‘I am not afraid—so you need not be, I think.’

‘O, very well,’ said Alec impassively. He stood still where he was, with his head just turned towards the window; and both remained in the same frozen attitude of petrified expectation, neither with any clear idea of what there was to dread.

Joe, as he crossed the bit of level lawn under the drawing-room windows, had indistinctly seen the two figures inside. A puzzling impression seized him, and in his uncontrollable impatience to satisfy himself he was wrong, he stopped short, and instead of going round to the garden-door mounted the window-stairs, lifted the sash from outside and stepped in.

A feeling without a name in the language of the passions seemed to leap upon him and choke him. A rush of savage indignation flung back upon himself by the flat impossibility of giving it due vent. For a moment he lost head, made a hasty step towards Alec with a menace in countenance and movement. The look that met him was perfectly unmoved; the handsome face stamped with that cool, audacious *insouciance* which Joe had lately come to loathe.

Their eyes met on a level, for the two men were of a height, only measured against his antagonist Alec was a mere rush, for shape and strength. Splendid satisfaction for the other; to feel that if he had anything against this man he could have knocked the life out of him in a minute! Fine medicine for his own hurt, appeasing his soul with a burst of blind passion, like an exasperated animal spending its rage on the cloak of the hunter that has given him the slip. Such a triumph as devils may look on and laugh at—since both victories—of wrong and revenge—will redound to their honour and glory.

A dull blind sense of it all rushed on Joe, as, confronting Alec, he felt stunned the first instant by a sudden accursed intelligence of a mocking power there he could no more slay than he could get it for himself.

It gave Cressida a moment. She saw how vast was this least of two evils she had accepted, the sudden provocation that had made a madman of him, but she divined some remnant of her old influence might yet survive.

'Joe,' she interposed promptly, 'Mr. de Saumarez is leaving Seacombe to-night. He wished to see me first, and came this afternoon. And now,' she continued, raising her expressionless eyes to Alec's face, 'you should be going, I think, or you may be too late.'

The effort of will, to hold her ground steadily, cut short the scene quietly, restrain Joe from saying a word till they were alone, through the successful insistence of a calm mind striving to keep the storm in another in check, seemed to tax every nerve in her; her eyes swam, she lost her breath, and was sensible of nothing except that Joe, yielding unconsciously to the sway of her voice,

had not opened his lips the while, that what she dreaded had been averted, and Alec was gone.

Joe had recovered his senses, and stood looking at his wife.

'Well acted,' he said coolly, and still staring her blankly in the face. 'Upon my word, Cressida, I—' he stopped and broke off into a half-convulsive, unnatural laugh.

Now let Cressida, who has let loose the winds, preach moderation and justice and patience and fair play. She felt her impotence, and only looked at him beseechingly.

'Stop,' he said, with a sudden change of countenance, putting his hand on her wrist, and drawing her nearer to him that he might read her face. 'Did you expect—did you know he might come this afternoon?'

'O, I knew that,' said Cressida, with a lurking flash of defiance she repented. Less and less could she hope to be heard now.

Joe dropped her hand suddenly; his hold was rougher than in his excitement he knew.

'You hurt me,' she said.

'Hurtyou,' he repeated, laughing, with that wild inexpressible contempt those rouse in us who, feminine wise, cry out for a scratched finger, *their* grievance, when they have wounded our soul past surgery. 'Like you—to talk of hurting. You want that right all to yourself, I think.'

She said nothing—waited. Self-command of a sort was returning to him by degrees. He flung himself into a chair—away from her.

'I'm glad you came,' she said, still a little breathless, 'I may tell you now that my letter—the letter you forbade me to send, was written to forbid him to come. Had you trusted me then, you and I would have been spared this, and I should have been spared seeing him any more, as I desired.'

'You're an admirable actress,' he replied tauntingly, 'but what's the good of it here—now?'

'I think you're unfair,' said Cressida impetuously. 'I wished to do this right thing and you would not believe me.'

'O, I know,' said he vacantly, sinking his head in his hands, 'I have it all. I tyrannise, I'm arbitrary, hard, and so on. You said to yourself you would see him in spite of me. Have your way; and I—I'm an idiot because I want to cross it, and because I speak out to you, now I know exactly how faithful your heart can be.'

'I don't know what you have to make you so bitter against me except that I let him see me to-day against your will. It may have been wrong, but God knows I'm glad I did, if it has made an end.'

'You don't know?' he repeated, starting up, not heeding her last words. 'You mean you think I don't know that you were never frank with me on that point, Cressida, not from the beginning; you chose to keep from me that there ever had been anything between you. You never said a word, not when I began those dealings with him; you let me take his money, left me to learn what I ought to have heard long ago from you, from the written slanders of some low villain, who thought he'd pay off his grudge to me that way.'

'What?' she said sharply.

'O, they wrote lies, I daresay,' he continued, more calmly. 'I could not think why they should sting; there was a bit of truth that did that—enough for me.'

Cressida shivered. O, that miserable weakness, truckling ambition, fatal habit of half-conscious self-deception, reasoning herself into self-indulgence and time-serving!

'Whatever you heard,' she said firmly—'and I don't deny that I was quite wrong not to be perfectly open about it with you, as I might—there could be no truth there that could make you feel towards me as you are feeling now.'

'What?' said Joe, with a fierce scorn breaking out again, 'not enough? What do you suppose I wanted of you? I was simpleton enough to believe you had a grain of truth in your heart. A look at the past should have taught me better. You cheated Norbert Alleyne. People were right in what they said of you then—that the man who could trust anything to you and your seeming was a fool, who deserved no better than he would get.'

'Joe, what is the matter?' she cried painfully. 'Do you know what you are saying to me?'

He was strangely roused indeed, by such an excessive violence of emotion as had never visited him yet, and came out with the strong crushing words that rushed straight from his heart to his lips.

'No, you're right,' he muttered gloomily. 'I've forgotten myself, so far as to speak the truth to you nobody ever spoke before.'

He remained looking vacantly before him. His head throbbed; he could not think—his sensations had all run wild; he was conscious only of a restless longing to escape into the open air; he felt he should be stifled if he remained any longer in that room. The impulse took possession of him. He got up, seized his cap, and flung out of the room—out of the house.

Cressida went and stood before the fireplace. That sweet face of hers she had loved so well met her in the glass above. It seemed to echo back Joe's last words.

All true. Norbert, Joe, Alec—here was she, branded by each of them, severally, as worse than their enemy, their false friend. Misery. How had it all come about?

The reaction left her entirely exhausted. She sat down to rest, and remained for some hours, careless, almost unconscious, in her overwhelming lassitude, of the lapse of time. Then she tried to rouse herself. All indoors was quiet, but outside the storm ran high. The servants came in for orders; she answered mechanically, putting them off till Mr. Kennedy came in. She was recovering now, and impatiently waiting, listening for Joe's return. The gale had risen considerably in the last two hours, and on her quickened nerves the sounds of disturbed nature told with the strange power they take sometimes. The moaning, sighing wind that shook the house in sudden squalls now and then, the dull roar of the sea in the distance,—all combined to intensify the arch foreboding and shapeless fears within her.

It was late now. She suddenly realised it—ten o'clock—and a kind of panic dread seized her. She dared not go out, yet to remain thus helpless and inactive at home was terrible. The sound of a ring—not Joe's—made her start violently. She heard a woman's voice in the hall. Who in the world would come to her at this hour? She rushed out to see.

'Fan!' she exclaimed. For a moment, as they looked into each other's eyes, they forgot they had not parted yesterday.

Cressida drew her visitor after her into the drawing-room, and shut the door quickly.

'If you could tell,' began Cressida, rather wildly, 'how thankful

I am you have come. But what sent you?'

'I had been down with Norbert to the bay below the cliff to see the storm. We were going back, and met Mr. Kennedy.'

'Well?' said Cressida eagerly.

'We stopped to speak to him. Cressida, I don't know how or why—I felt I must come to you at once. Norbert has gone home. Do you want me?'

'Do I?' said Cressida in a choked voice, burying her face on Fan's shoulder. 'O Fan, is there not a world somewhere where we could hide—you and I—where no one could come to vex us! Only women are kind and forgiving.'

She raised her head, and told the facts briefly, but without reservation.

'I will stay with you till he comes back,' was all Fan could say now; and there they sat waiting, Cressida's fevering anxiety growing apace.

'What was that?' she asked sharply, as by and by a booming sound caught their ears, distinct amid the roar of wind and sea.

'There's a ship in distress, I'm afraid. We heard as we came back. It drove past the harbour—couldn't get in, and ran on the rocks out beyond the bay. There was a crowd on the look-out, and making their way to the shore; but the sea was too heavy, they said, to launch a boat.'

'Fan, let us go down there at once,' said Cressida impetuously; 'I don't care for anything—Joe will be there, I know he will. I cannot sit here any longer, or I shall go mad.'

'Well—' said Fan. 'But if he should come home?'

'You don't know him,' said Cressida; 'if those men are in danger, Joe will be on the spot, to lend help if it is wanted, and—'

she stopped short—a sudden expression of nameless anxiety crossed her face.

‘He wouldn’t go and risk any great danger, surely?’ asked Fan urgently—‘not expose himself rashly, I mean. For your sake he never would—it would be wrong.’

‘I cannot tell,’ she said confusedly; ‘he might not care to-night what he did, for he would not think of me. O, let us go!’

They started to walk down to the sea. The rain had ceased, but the wind, as they neared the cliff, beat in their faces boisterously. Fan wondered to see Cressida, accounted so delicate and easily tired, tread her way along, seeming not to be conscious of discomfort or exertion. O, to get down to the beach! They were coming near at last, breathless. Many were hastening along in the same direction, and a large crowd of fishermen, pilots, and others were gathered below; it was difficult to distinguish faces or make out what was going on, but Cressida fancied she had caught sight of Joe moving about in the very centre of the group.

For an hour those watchers had been waiting for the sea to moderate sufficiently to enable them to get the boat off. They had hoped that the vessel would hold out till help could be sent. It seemed now as if that would not be. The signals were urgent. She was very much damaged, and lying there beaten about by the waves might go to pieces any moment. The sailors were talking of manning the boat at once, and trying to launch it at all hazards.

The new-comers tried to approach, but were thrust back, and unable to get beyond the edge of the throng. To Cressida the scene was all wild, chaotic noise and bustle. The shouts and cries of

the crowd seemed to have no method in them; the surging mass of water made her giddy to look at, and her unpractised eyes could barely distinguish the wretched brig, labouring on the rocks, with tons of water breaking over her, and the crew clinging to the rigging.

The sea had very slightly moderated, however; some thought they might get the boat off, and that there was just a chance for her. So far as the ship’s crew were concerned, no further delay was possible.

Joe was in the thick of the crowd. Cressida and Fan could come nowhere near him, but could see him now and then as the lanterns flashed on his figure—taller than most of the men about him—lending a hand here and there with the preparations, ropes, buoys—active, eager, stirred to double energy in the exciting suspense as to whether the seamen out there would be saved or not. Despairing of getting nearer to the front, Cressida must snatch from the utterances of the bystanders what intelligence she could of what was going on.

They were hauling down the boat now. Several had offered to go with it. All these volunteers seemed well known. One or two were held back—they were willing to venture themselves, but had wives and children dependent on them, or parents to support; their place was taken by others, mostly younger fellows, with fewer ties or none. The crowd name them one by one as they get in—and now who is that just about to enter with the rest, the only stranger among them all?

Joe. He has forgotten everything in the fascination of danger and action. His eye is quick, his hand steady, his head cool; he is giving orders and executing them.

‘He is not going—he *must* not



go,' cried Cressida vehemently, with a last frantic effort to get near him. Her voice was lost in the hubbub, and she and her companion were helpless to part the barricade.

Then she heard a voice—it was the old harbour-master who was superintending the proceedings. He put his hand on Joe's arm, did not recognise him or distinguish him in his rough seafaring garments from the sailors around, and said doubtfully,

'Those first who have no wife or child at home—no one belonging to them.'

'Back, you fool!' Cressida heard Joe's voice with a ring in it that was for her alone—'I have none—there's no one belonging to me, I tell you!'

It had thrown her into a half-stupor. Automatically she heard the people around her saying that the boat was manned and they were getting it off now.

The launching, to all but sailors, seemed impracticable. To Cressida it looked like going to certain death. Fan kept whispering to her that the sea had gone down a little. Everybody was praising the noble fellows who had risked themselves so willingly, and now a cheer rose from the crowd—they were off—there was the little craft on the crest of a wave. Cressida must watch its course.

It had a tough struggle with the tide but seemed to be making headway. Joe was conspicuous among the sailors, doing the work of two. Danger had an intoxication for him, and, straining there at his oar, he existed neither for past nor future, never looked back, was conscious of nothing but that those fellows out there had been hanging for hours between life and death, and might perhaps be saved.

Soon Cressida could see no more

of the boat, but there were seamen around with spy-glasses who reported its progress. Presently a cheer from the shore announced that they were nearing the brig—had succeeded in throwing a line. They were getting the men off.

The next announcement was that the seas were breaking heavily over both crews. The position of the rescuers was becoming more perilous every minute—but three of the men belonging to the vessel were still on the deck. The deliverers stood out manfully. To steer off and leave those wretches to drown, with life almost within grasp, was what nobody thought of doing.

That was a critical moment. Now the waves threatened to swamp the fishermen's boat; it battled still. Another effort, and the last stragglers were got in. Another cheer came from the shore but died suddenly away.

A heavy surge has swept over the boat and carried off two of the sailors who were helping the refugees to clamber over the side.

For Cressida heaven and earth were eclipsed—the sun turned into darkness, the moon into blood. She did not faint nor sink; but neither lived she in those few instants. It was Fan's voice in her ear, tremulous but cheering, telling her that the two men had been recovered, that the boat was making its way back, which awoke her to life and to the sense of a single fear usurping all else in her.

The struggle with the waves had recommenced—severe, protracted, terrible, exciting to witness—the landing fraught with the utmost danger. But the boat was brought to shore in safety at last, the crowd pressing round eagerly on all sides as it was hauled up the beach. This time Cressida thinks she *will* break through that wall of flesh and blood. The ranks

have parted a little and she succeeds in pushing forwards to the edge of the front group standing round the boat, now landed high and dry on the beach. But here she was stopped. They thronged back. One of the sailors was trying to keep a clear space.

'Out of the way there,' he said.

'What is it?' asked Fan sharply.

'They're bringing ashore the two poor fellows who got struck overboard—Bob the pilot—and the stranger gentleman. There's some one seeing to them. Stand back I say.'

But the two women have forced their way to the centre, where an old weather-beaten sailor, well used to such scenes and casualties, is occupied with Bob, who is beginning to recover. He will be all right, the tar thinks. As for the other, he doesn't know. Seems badly hurt. The seaman shook his head. The boatmen say he was flung against the ship's iron and—

He stopped. A glance at Cressida's face made him somehow repent he had spoken. They talked hope to her now.

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(To be continued.)

## A PILGRIMAGE IN THE PEAK.

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### PROLOGUE.

WE call him 'Kalmat,' after the hero of Joseph Hatton's *Clytie*. He is so broad-chested, bronzed, bearded, and boyish. He broke in upon me in the busy Midland town, where I, a descendant of the Danaides, am doomed day by day to empty an inkpot whose ink never diminishes. He was 'passing through,' he said, and came to 'look me up.' A wanderer upon the face of the earth is 'Kalmat.' Like Dr. Syntax, he is ever travelling in search of the picturesque. He has employed most of the Swiss guides; he knows Norway better, perhaps, than some cockneys know London; he has penetrated into Japan; he has communed with Nature in the far-away fastnesses of the Sacramento. He lighted a *cabaña*, and began to talk about his next trip.

'Have you ever done Derbyshire?' I asked.

He owned, after some hesitation, that he had once been to Buxton, and that he was at one time the owner of a spar ornament which was inscribed, 'A Present from Matlock.' These two facts comprehended all 'Kalmat's' knowledge of 'the English Switzerland.' He had seen acres of art at Antwerp, Rome, and Versailles, but somehow the princely galleries of Chatsworth had escaped his notice. He had been packed with perspiring tourists on full-flavoured steamboats to behold ruins on the Rhine; but the olden glories of Haddon Hall, Hardwick

House, and Wingfield Manor were unknown to him. He had climbed the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc, and could chat glibly about the giant Jungfrau and the terrific Schreckhorn; but had never heard of Axe Edge, Masson, Crich Cliff, Thorpe Cloud, and Kinder Scout. He probably knew more of the Peak of Teneriffe than of the Peak of Derbyshire. The latter he, like many other people, no doubt dismissed as a solitary rocky altitude, instead of a wide expanse of alternating moor and meadow and mountain, green valley and glancing stream, limestone tor and forest ridge; a single peak, instead of a stretch of poetic country which, while it absorbs most of the shire of Derby, embraces the counties of Stafford and Nottingham, and loses itself in Cheshire and Yorkshire, only to reappear in Lakeland, and afterwards across the Border. No; 'Kalmat' knew nothing of the Peak country. Derbyshire to him was a *terra incognita*. He could go hundreds, yea thousands, of miles away, in search of the romantic, but he neglected the 'beauty-spots' close at hand. He sinned with many. Scenery, like charity, should begin at home. It is to home we come last of all to find it.

It wanted a couple of hours to noon, so I prevailed upon 'Kalmat' to stay and have a day in Derbyshire. I planned a walk that should enrapture him. The June sun came through the window, and supported the invitation with promises of an unclouded

day. The wind brought messages of scent from the country. We were just in time for the Wirksworth train, and soon were steaming through the green valley of the Ecclesbourne. What lazy little stations! How do you pronounce 'Idridgehay'? and what do you think of 'Shottle'? The stoppage of the train at Wirksworth brings the short railway journey and my long introduction to a close.

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A peaceful Peak town this Wirksworth, the key to ever so many doors of delicious scenery. None of the throb of the nineteenth century disturbs its dreamy streets. The town, clustering round the crumbling old church, is completely shut in by investing hills from the noisy world. On these hillsides Dinah Morris used to preach; near here is the workshop of Adam Bede; there is the Hall Farm; and yonder is Donnithorne Chase; for it is in this district that George Eliot found the characters and scenes of one of the noblest novels in the literature of fiction. 'Kalamat' is hungry for the legends of the place; but in Wirksworth you are not liable to 'break your shins against history.' The Roman and Saxon lead-workings are a reminiscence of the past industrial importance of the town, and are certainly more interesting than the more modern limestone quarries and kilns which are blurring the beauty of the rocks. But the most mendacious local guide cannot hope to point out a dungeon in which Mary Queen of Scots was confined, or a ruined wall which was ever the butt of Cromwell's cannon. One charming custom of the past, however, clings to the place. 'Kalamat' has never heard of Wirksworth 'Well Dressings.' The festival

of well-flowering is a piece of ancient poetry which appears to be preserved only in the Peak. The early summer time brings Derbyshire people several celebrations of the kind. Each public well or spring is converted into a floral shrine, formed in the first instance by wood covered with wet clay and white plaster. This framework receives a magic mosaic of wild-flowers, an arabesque of blossom. The woods and valleys are waited upon for decorative subscriptions, and respond liberally. Forget-me-nots, hyacinths, lilacs, and violets contribute gradations of blue. The gold is given by the tassels of the laburnum, the blossom of the furze bush, and the rich buttercup. More subdued tints are presented by gray lichens and brown mosses. The tender spring shoots of the yew give a light green, and the winter foliage of the same tree supplies a sombre shade. Crimson berries produce a gleam of gay colour. White daisies are embroidered by deft fingers into doves and lambs. Scripture texts are worked in blended wild-flowers, and framed with feathery ferns. The designs show the village architects to be true artists—poets, painters, sculptors, though they may not be able to read or write. They produce floral pictures, poems in flowers. Arches and temples, spires and towers, are built out of blossoms. Bible allegories are made in flowers. The ceremony is an antiquated one, and perhaps no more pleasing custom is left in 'merrie England.' Let us hope that civilisation, which has given us much and robbed us of more, will not frighten this lingering festival from the Derbyshire hills.

Me! This gossip about well-dressing has been above a mile long. We have sauntered up-hill

out of the town, and are now at the foot of Stonnis: a group of piled-up embattled crags so ponderous and sombre that they have been called the Black Rocks. The shape of this dark ridge suggests, even to a mind not given to ready comparisons, an impregnable bastion. The top-most blocks projecting over the precipice look like threatening cannon. The highest of them are pointed out the furthest; and one monster mass of iron-like stone, a natural 100-ton gun, broad at the breech, and narrow towards the muzzle, aims across the land, as if the tall pine gunners standing behind had orders to open fire on the battlements of Riber Castle on the opposite hill. Across the metals of the High Peak railway, writhing through the hilly country like a serpent of steel, and then a steep ascent for us knee-deep in ferns and over fallen rocks. A stiff climb up the side of gray grit-stones, with here and there a friendly young tree to lend assistance to the outstretched hand, and then a grateful rest on the wind-swept summit; a green carpet of velvet pile, with a poetical crest of pines waving their storm-rent funeral plumes above, and a mossy wood behind. 'Kalmat' admits that below is one of the sublimest views he ever beheld. It is certainly one of the most romantic prospects in Derbyshire. Fairyland is at our feet; a wide-reaching radius of romance; a painter's dream of landscape loveliness; one of the largest areas of bird's-eye view that the eye can enjoy. We sit and let the scene sketch itself on our memory, photograph its outlines on a mental collodion-plate. Let me focus the camera while the sun is on the picture, and secure it by the 'instantaneous process.' A stone dropped from our obser-

vatory would alight upon the High Peak railway—a mineral line—that is winding round curves which make one shudder for the safety of the approaching train, panting in the distance up gradients that seem to upset the law of gravitation. Low down to the left lies Wirksworth hid in the white vapour of the limekilns; climbing up the roadside, past those precipitous stone-quarries, is Middleton; that intersection in the hills below is where the Via Gellia valley traces its romantic course; beyond a patchwork of green fields gray with sheep, so motionless that they appear to be protruding pieces of limestone; fields, by the way, divided by low walls of loose stone, for the shade of hedgerows is unknown in the Peak country. Right down in the hollow at our feet nestles Cromford. The sun flashes back its bright beams from the windows of the Arkwright mills. There is the church, and the river-bridge, and the Derwent, now a band of silver in the meadows, now lost among the trees, then radiant in the valley again, and anon absorbed by the woods of Alderwasley, where the directing finger of a sunbeam points to Crich Stand, shining in the blue hazy distance, like a Cleopatra's needle, on the crest of the great gray cliff. 'Kalmat' is enchanted with the view of Matlock in the middle distance, which the eye, skipping over Cromford, lingers upon long and lovingly. The tall projecting crags, that break through the foliage and overhang the curving river, seem small from this altitude, where we look down upon the swelling hills that expand above the cliffs and reach to the horizon line. The highest point across the valley is where the towers of Riber stand out clear-cut against the summer sky. Be-

low, like the other Matlock rocks, dwarfed in dimensions by the eminences above, is the majestic mass of limestone, the pride and glory of Matlock—the High Tor. Opposite to it rises Masson with its plume of pines; while the wooded villa-dotted spur of hill down at its side is the Heights of Abraham. Beyond Matlock, where the sunlight ripples over an ocean of gorse and wild-thyme and heather, is Ashover; and, right away in the picturesque perspective, hill and dale, cottage and farm and hall, and white winding roads—— But there! my prepared plate is not large enough for the picture, and 'Kalmat' is reading aloud the 'testimony of the rocks,' scratched by the penknives of a nation of enthusiastic Smiths and Browns and Joneses and Robinsons. The Black Rocks seem to be the happy hunting-ground of amateur stonecutters. One adventurous mortal, not to be outdone by the John Smith who tried to carve his name on the iron face of the mighty mystic Sphinx, or the Robinsons who leave their autographs on the Pyramids, has cut his initials on the very nose of the highest projecting rock that hangs sheer over the giddy precipice. The author of this folly must have crawled to the brain-reeling point, and lain prone while he toiled at his madman's monogram. 'Kalmat' says he shall be disappointed if that man's epitaph is not to be found among the rocks below. Some penknives have broken out into verse; one has elaborated a drawing of a quadruped entitled 'Balaam's Ass'; and in places where the rock has been too flinty for persevering steel, the scribblers have taken their distressed blades to the naked trunks of the pines, and entered their names and the day of

the month upon the bronzed bark.

Scrambling down again, and on to the turnpike leading to Middleton, with a marching accompaniment from a band of birds—the trumpet of thrush, the bassoon of cuckoo, the clarionet of blackbird, the piccolo of robin, and the fife of linnet. The laburnum hangs out its banners on the outer walls of a roadside cottage, and there is an intoxicating sweetness from the purple lilacs. Middleton is one long, narrow, straggling, sordid street, climbing up the shoulder of a hill so steep that the wonder is the houses do not push each other down. One or two pretty houses, flanked and fronted with garden gleams of colour, only serve to lend additional meagreness to the little struggling shops and hovels. The hamlet might have been borrowed from Bulgaria, or it might illustrate Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. Some of the houses turn their backs on you. Others are in ruins. The thick stone walls are crumbling into decay. The rafters are grass-grown and desolate. The decline of lead-mining has made the village a vulgar Baalbec. The tumble-down tenements are so many melancholy *Hic jacets* of a departed industry. But Middleton (whose name, by the way, is shared by a much prettier village in the Peak) gives access to the Via Gellia, one of the sweetest of Derbyshire valleys.

Deep down winds the secluded valley between steep mountain walls of living green, broken here and there by the gray scarp of a ragged limestone crag. The ambuscade on either hand, noisy with birds and fragrant with perfumes that a Rimmel could never extract, is a study of trees. On the lower waves of the billowy sea of green a thicket of dense undergrowth, wild-briers, woodbines, hollies,



and hazel and blackberry bushes that in the autumn time will make the Via Gellia a forest of fruit. Over this tangle the willow droops her pale leaves, half hid in the luminous leafage of branching limes and the stout foliage of alders and chestnuts. Higher still, the silvery birch, 'the lady of the woods,' waves her winsome tresses, and the mountain-ash disputes a place with the larches and sycamores and maples and the young oaks that are being strangled in their upward growth by the tendrils of the picturesque but paralysing ivy; while right above the bright broad boles of these trees the dark spires of the sombre fir and the storm-stained pine-spines stand out erect on the windy edge of the summit in a solitude of their own, a *chevaux de frise* against the sky. It is a valley of flowers. The roadside is starred with primroses. Lilies-of-the-valley are as common here as the buttercups in May meadows. The blue eyes of the forget-me-not, heavy with tears, peep from the bankside. The bluebell and the white convolvulus gem the verdure. The pale wood anemone is mixed up in a 'fern paradise' of gray moss and lichen and trembling maiden-hair, and the coy violet betrays her presence in scent. A chattering little stream runs alongside the road. Presently comes a Gothic cottage, and at its side Dunale Waterfall, leaping, a white wave of foam, from the hill-top, shouts with joy as it tumbles down the rocks to be welcomed by the laughing little rivulet, which has changed its course from our left hand to our right, momentarily ceasing its chatter to pass under the road unobserved.

A felled tree in the glade by the water-margin, begs us to be seated. Our satchel is opened. There is an epicurean flavour about

our sandwiches for which an Apicius or a Lucullus might have craved. 'Hunger-sauce' makes them appetising. The fresh elastic air is a sort of ethereal champagne. Our tablecloth of green is adorned with Nature's epergnes of wild-flowers, and a choir of feathered choristers are singing while we eat. The odour from our pipes now mixes with the resinous scent of the trees. The only sound is that of birds and brook. Such experiences as these are the renewals of life. They are payments into the Bank of Health, leaving a balance in hand to meet the claims of Sickness when he steps in for his dividend. The country is the true physician. When Hercules could lift Antæus from the fields he was too strong for the giant; but when Antæus again touched the green earth, he was inspired with new vigour, and at once overcame his foe. The fields and woodlands freshen us for the fight against Hercules, as they did the mythical Antæus. Poor Mortimer Collins has applied the classic conceit in verse.

Sauntering down the valley again. There are dark gaps in the universal green that excite curiosity. They turn out to be ancient lead-workings. The adventurous 'Kalmat' pilots the path into the cavernous gloom of one of these vaults. We light a newspaper torch, and stumble over the stones underfoot. Ugh! the water breaks from the cold walls on our left, and there is a channel of water on our right. The damp mine winds in its rocky course for a hundred yards or more. There is an unearthly sound of weird water rumbling into unknown depths in front. The newspaper flambeau is giving out, and we see the wet walls and each other's face in a spectral, shuddering, Rembrandt light. Suppose

we should stumble on the victim of some secret murder in this deserted cave? Suppose—'Kalmat' positively proposes to ignite some letters he has found in his pocket; but I give ominous hints of 'fire-damp' and 'choke-damp.' It is damp enough anyway; and so we turn back to the opening, which has diminished into the size of a threepenny-piece, and I inwardly resolve to introduce the scene in a blood-curdling chapter of my ghastly romance, the *Lost Lead-Miner: a Secret of the Hills*. The glad light again, with the sprightly stream rambling through a bed of furze and fern and fox-gloves and flowers, until it is directed into a sort of continuous wooden trough, green with lichen and clinging weeds; but the glancing water despises the restraint, and wanders out of the artificial channel into mossy windings of its own. Half a mile of this wild beauty, and then comes a cluster of cottages, colour-works, lime-kilns, and cupola furnaces. The trees wear a dimmer green. The birds are less blithe. The water of the rivulet is reddened, like a little Alma, as if with blood; but a little further on in its progress it becomes pure and pellucid again, like a soul that has been washed from sin, and forms itself into linked reservoirs, fed by tributary streams that trickle down the hill-side. There is an old weedy water-wheel by the roadside in an artist's setting of scenery, and presently comes the sign of the Pig of Lead, a hostelry that reminds us that we have reached Bonsall. Shall we pursue the rivulet to the cotton-mill romance of Cromford, or desert it for the beauties of Bonsall? The difficulty of decision is a great one. Both paths have particular charms. We are in the position of the classic donkey,

which perished between two bundles of equally dainty hay; of De Quincey, who, having six hours to spend in London when passing through, spent them on the steps of the hotel vainly endeavouring to decide what to go and see; of the typical Englishman of the time in the old cartoon, who stands naked amid a great pile of garments, embarrassed as to which clothes he shall wear. 'Kalmat' solves the problem by a vulgar expedient—heads, Bonsall; tails, Cromford. It is heads.

A primitive little village, this Bonsall, with a hundred and fifty marble bridges. So the local joke puts it; for the rivulet, which runs down the side of the street, is crossed at the cottage-doors by doorsteps of Derbyshire marble. Bonsall once boasted a market, and a prim market-cross climbs up from a basement of a dozen steps or more to proudly assert the fact. But the most picturesque object in this old-world village is the venerable church, which stands upon a rocky elevation and gives its benediction over the heads of the houses that are kneeling beneath. The landscape from this tranquil churchyard on the steep shoulder of the hill, with the westering sun throwing up his last lances of light from the Wirksworth hills, and the valley lying in a shining stillness, is one of the most pleasing visions of the day. Through the churchyard, where the trees are tapping, tapping at the windows of the old church; past the grand old yew, gloomy with age, for it has braved the storms and basked in the sunshine of centuries; and over the hills in the sunset light to Matlock, which bursts abruptly upon us below—a *coup de théâtre* of wooded hill, jutting crag, bright river, and pretty houses all steeped in the last glow of day.

Down the steep side of Mason, over somebody's fences, to a late dinner at the Devonshire. A balcony at the hotel overhangs the Derwent, whose bosom is now jewelled with a trembling star. We are sitting outside in the twilight, with coffee and cigars, facing the old rook-haunted elms of the Lovers' Walks, with the river murmuring down below, and the evening breeze bringing the musical roar of the weir up the stream. It would be pleasant to linger; but the warm glow has died out of the sky, a mist is rising from the water, the wooded banks opposite are becoming black and shadowy. It is, moreover, train-time. So we leave for the station, carrying away with us choice vignettes photographed on the brain; so many pleasant dreams to be recalled when we are confronted by the crushing realities of life;

poems to be read amid drear pages of prose; summer sunshine to be borrowed on dark wintry days with lowering skies, brutal winds, and blinding fogs; green oases in the sandy Sahara of existence to cheer 'our uneasy steps over the burning waste.'

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## EPILOGUE.

I am emptying the inkstand again. It is autumn now. The post brings me a letter from 'Kalmat.' He says: 'I own with humility that I have been scandalously neglectful of the charms of my own country; for England, I am finding out, is the most beautiful place in the world. That Derbyshire of yours is a pocket-edition of Switzerland, a microcosm of all that is romantic in Nature. I can only pay penance for my past neglect by making another Pilgrimage to the Peak.'

STREPHON.



## THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

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### CHAPTER XXI.

#### A TERRIBLE ACCUSATION.

AFTER having run for about an hour, I paused. The clearing could not be far off, and it seemed to me that I ought to have reached it by this time. Escorted by the ants to the scene of action, I had not thought to note the features of the landscape to help me on my way back; for of course I had never dreamt of returning alone. I had suddenly come to a place where nothing grew but fir-trees. I was certain we had not passed it in the morning.

There was no longer any room for doubt. I had lost my way. Feeling very uneasy, I caught sight of a snail, which was slowly crawling over some moss hard by. I ran up to him, and asked him if he could direct me to the ant-hill; but at the first words I spoke the stupid mollusc drew himself into his shell, and I could not induce him to come out again.

What was I to do? The fir-wood did not seem to be of any

great extent, but how was I to know which way to turn to get into the right road? Should I go to the right or to the left? It was impossible to know which was correct.

I decided on the left. Some insects of whom I made inquiries could tell me nothing definite. Some of sluggish habits had never even heard of the ant-hill; others knew it, but gave me contradictory directions. Others, again, asked which ant-hill I wanted, as there were two in the wood. I did not know which any more than they did, but I explained that the one I was seeking was in a clearing at the foot of two beeches. At that I was told that they were both in a clearing; and as for whether one of them was or was not at the foot of two beeches, they did not know, for they had not noticed. At last, after much wandering to and fro, I was fortunate enough to meet an ant-beetle.

I told him of the awkward position in which I found myself, and explained why I was so anxious to find my way. He pointed it out to me, and even offered to

accompany me; but as he could not walk very fast, and the directions he gave me were most precise, I thanked him for his courtesy, and resumed my journey,



hoping this time to reach my goal.

I was worn out with fatigue, and it was beginning to get dark when I reached the clearing.

Having rapidly considered my bearings, I ran to the spot where the reserve corps had been stationed in the morning, not, if the

truth be told, with any great hope of finding it, nor at all shutting my eyes to the probable consequences of the delay in giving the message with which I was intrusted.

The thought that I had been the involuntary cause of the delay filled me with regret.

Why had I not taken the ant on my back who had been

sent to me by our distressed troops? She would have directed me. But one cannot think of everything; and being almost off my head when I started on the spur of the moment, I never considered that, as I was not in the habit of going about in the wood, I might lose my way and fail to arrive in time.

At last I reached the spot where we had halted. It was deserted.

There was nothing left for me to do but to return without further delay to the ant-hill, which I did forthwith.

The doors were being barricaded when I arrived, and the guards seemed surprised to see me returning alone. My first words were to ask for news of the army. None had been received, and now that I had come I was expected to bring tidings. There was great uneasiness, I was told, as to the fate of the expeditionary force. In a few words I imparted all I knew, and in an instant the ant-hill was in a state of ferment.

I had to repeat my story some twenty times, as I was dragged to the public room, where a consultation was to be held at once.

There, as may be imagined, the excitement was intense, and all manner of conjectures were hazarded as to the fate of the army, each one expressing his own opinion, till the hubbub became deafening. The prevailing idea, however, was that the battle had lasted until nightfall, and that the army was now in full retreat on the ant-hill. Had it been beaten? Had it been victorious? Was the retreat, if retreat it indeed were, being made in good order, or was it a rout? Then came endless suggestions. Some proposed that messengers should be sent out to obtain news; others, and these were in the majority,

thought it would be better to wait, seeing that nothing would be gained by early intelligence: if the army were beaten, they should hear it soon enough; if it were victorious, the expeditionary corps would be back very shortly; in any case nothing could be done before the morning: it would be best therefore to wait patiently.

The latter opinion carried the day. I asked for Meg; but no one could tell me where she was. After partaking of food—of which I stood urgently in need, for I was literally dying of hunger—I went back to my room, to rest from my fatigue whilst waiting for news.

I was soon sound asleep.

Towards the middle of the night a slight noise at my door woke me. Some one was cautiously calling to me. I raised one of the beams forming the door of my room, and saw Meg, who came in, looking very anxious.

She shut the door carefully, and then coming up to me she whispered,

'Cricket, I have come to warn you that your life is in danger here; you must fly without delay.'

These words roused me completely.

'What do you say?' I cried.

'My life is in danger!'

'Yes.'

'And why?'

'This is why: you must know that a first body of troops has been almost entirely destroyed. This catastrophe is the result of the too-tardy arrival of the reserve corps, which was not summoned in time. You were charged with that important mission, and you know how badly you performed it. You are accused of treason!'

'Treason! I a traitor! Why, Meg, you know I lost myself in the wood. I have made no secret of that.'



'O, of course not; that's your version of the matter; but unfortunately it does not tally with the general opinion. I repeat that you are suspected of treason.'

'But I am no traitor, Meg. I have spoken the truth. I will defend myself.'

'Don't attempt it, Cricket: my people's blood is up; your explanations would not be listened to. Is it any good to reason with a mob? It might be all very well if a trial were granted to you. But there will be no trial. They will begin by murdering you.'

'But who can have brought such an accusation against me?'

'Who, indeed? You see you have enemies here. Do you remember what I told you?'

'O yes, I remember about the bombardier beetle affair. Botheration take the stupid creature! I wish I had never met him or made my unlucky exclamation. It's not the first time that acting on impulse has got me into trouble. What am I to do?'

'Fly, as I have already told you.'

'Fly! I daresay. That's easier said than done. The colony being lit up is all against me. If I show myself in the streets—'

'If you show yourself in the streets you will inevitably be put to death. The streets are full of people. You can hear that from here. In view of the approach of the enemy, the eggs, larvæ, and pupæ are being brought down into the basement as quickly as possible. The guards have been doubled at all the doors, which are closed in preparation for a siege; there is no escape for you through them.'

'Then I am lost!'

'No, not yet. One course is left to you.'

'What is that? Tell me quickly!'

'You are able to burrow in the earth.'

'Yes; but not in wood. And we are on the trunk of a tree.'

'That's true. But, by a lucky chance, this room is on the outer borders of the ant-hill; and by digging horizontally in the wall opposite the door, you will reach the virgin soil. No road has been made on that side.'

'What a happy chance! I'll set to work at once. You'll go with me, Meg?'

'Impossible. If I were absent when your flight is first discovered, I should certainly be accused of complicity with you, and it would soon be all over with me.'

'But I may lose myself underground.'

'O, no, you won't. If you follow the instructions I give you carefully, you will easily escape.'

'Say on, then.'

'You must pierce a horizontal passage opposite that door. When you get beyond the ant-hill—that is to say, when you have gone a distance equal to some fifteen or twenty times the length of your own body, which you can easily calculate—you must direct your course upwards. You can't fail to reach the surface of the ground, and you had better manage not to arrive there till to-morrow night.'

'O, it will take me quite that time to make my gallery. Will they not pursue me underground?'

'It's not very likely that they will. Throw the earth behind you as you advance. I'll take care to remove all traces of your work here. You will be supposed to have escaped by one of the doors, and you will be hunted for outside in the morning.'

'And when I get outside to-morrow night?'

'You will run away as fast as you can.'

'I shall lose myself again.'

'Call to me in a whisper; I'll take care to be within hearing.'

'Then good-bye, Meg; or rather, *au revoir*. Believe me, I am most grateful.'

'O yes, yes, I know all that; but don't waste time in talking. Set to work at once; we may be surprised at any moment.'

'One word more. Suppose I come to a stone?'

'That will be your look-out.

Go round it, only take care to keep in the right direction.'

'I'll try to.'

As I spoke I began to burrow, and the ground not being very hard I was soon buried to a depth of twice the length of my body. I flung the soil behind me, and Meg hastened to fill up the opening I had made; thus removing all trace of the mode in which I had made my escape.

'Good luck go with you!' she cried at the last moment; 'and good-bye till to-morrow.'



## CHAPTER XXII.

I ESCAPE, AND DECIDE THAT I HAVE HAD ADVENTURES ENOUGH.

I WAS now buried at a considerable depth and in complete darkness. I was thrown entirely on my own resources.

I had to burrow in a straight line, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left.

I set vigorously to work with my forefeet, taking care to burrow straight before me. No easy matter, I can tell you; for no one knows how difficult it is to follow a given direction without the aid of one's eyes.

As I crumbled the soil before me I flung it behind me, so that it was not exactly a passage I formed, but a kind of little square cell. I could not have gone back without turning round. I was obliged to continue to advance; and my chief fear was that I might come to some big stone, which would compel me to deviate from my course; in which case I should become confused, and run a risk of returning to the ant-hill, which it was so much to my interest to avoid.

Whilst I was busily digging

away with feet and jaws, I reflected thus:

'You see, Cricket, what has come of your ambitious dreams. You are obliged to flee like a malefactor from the town where you had hoped some day to reign. A few hours ago you were intoxicated with cries of "Long live the Cricket!" and the very voices which uttered them are now execrating you. O, the vanity of popular success! And what was the cause of this sad downfall? A thoughtless exclamation; an unlucky combination of circum-



stances. What ever induced you to applaud the prowess of that worthless bombardier beetle? The ungrateful wretch never gave you a word of thanks, and you made enemies who are having their revenge now. When will you learn not to act on impulse? Well, you have certainly had adventures enough now. If you get safe and sound out of this one, you will retire to some quiet spot, and spend the rest of your days far from noise and turmoil. You are not fitted for a life of excitement. Leave others to run about the

world. True happiness is to be found everywhere. There's no need to seek it painfully at a distance. It consists in being content with a little; in not craving after more than the necessities of life. And your wants are few, Cricket. You will divide your time between the culture of the arts and the contemplation of the beauties of Nature. To these you must henceforth limit your ambition.'

Several hours were spent in digging. I seemed to have made very good progress; but I began

to feel terribly cramped in my subterranean cavern. In spite of all my efforts, I could not so throw the earth I displaced in front as to make it occupy exactly its original position behind me, and the consequence was that I became more and more straitened for space. But for that, however, all went well. I was fortunate enough to have thus far met with no stone or other insuperable obstacle.

When I thought I had proceeded far enough in a horizontal direction to be beyond the limits of the ant-hill, I began to direct my course upwards; and then paused, partly to rest and partly to wait for the evening, as I must not arrive at the surface before night. I was getting very hungry, but it was of no use to think of eating then.

'Let's go to sleep,' I said to myself. 'Who sleeps, dines.'

And with that I fell asleep.

My sleep lasted a long time, and refreshed me greatly. When I woke I set to work again, and it seemed to me that the earth became softer, which proved that my rescue was nearly accomplished. A little later I was outside. It was night. At a short distance from me rose the ant-hill, silent and gloomy as it had been on the evening of my first arrival.

'Meg,' I murmured in a low voice—'Meg!' I waited a few minutes; then I repeated in a louder key, 'Meg!'

I then made out an ant advancing cautiously through the darkness. She had but one antenna. It was Meg.

'O, it is you, Cricket!' she said. 'It's all quiet now. Come out, and run as quickly as you can under that heather. I will follow you.' I did as she suggested, and she soon joined me beneath the tuft of heather under which I had

taken refuge for the time. 'Here you are, safe and sound, then,' went on Meg. 'Your underground journey went off well?'

'It couldn't have gone off better,' was my reply. 'But I am dying of hunger.'

'I provided for that. Here is some sugar I brought for you.'

I hastened to appease my appetite; and whilst I was eating, Meg told me all that had passed during the day. I had not left my room a minute too soon the previous evening; for just after my escape, the ants had arrived *en masse* to punish me, my enemies having spread the report of my reputed treason. Their fury on finding my room empty was immense; but fortunately the way in which I had made my exit did not occur to them. They hunted for me everywhere, both in and about the ant-hill; but at last, tired out, they gave up the vain search, and the gravity of subsequent events had made them forget all about me.

In fact, very serious things had taken place. I learnt that the first body of troops had been cut to pieces, and almost completely destroyed; that the reserve corps, surprised at receiving no tidings of their comrades, had themselves marched in the course of the afternoon, and after a long tramp had met some fugitives, who had told them of the catastrophe which had occurred in the ravine. Lastly, that whilst they were deliberating as to what was to be done, the enemy surrounded them in their turn and cut them to pieces, as they had done their predecessors. A few ants, some fifty at the most, had escaped, and after wandering about in the wood nearly all night had regained the ant-hill.

'This morning,' added Meg, 'a second army, larger than the first,

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set out for the frontier. Fighting has been going on without any definite result, although our forces have had to retire from the field of battle. The losses have been enormous on both sides. That is how things stand at present.'

'Shall you begin again to-morrow?'

'Without the slightest doubt.'

'But how will it all end?'

'I am very much afraid it will end badly for us. From what one of my friends, who took part in the



last battle, tells me, it must have been an awful struggle. Our troops behaved splendidly, but the enemy mustered in vast numbers. Every hour reinforcements arrived for them. They literally seemed to spring from the ground, to fall

from the trees, to be rained from the skies.'

'It strikes me that the best thing I can do now is to make off as fast as I can. Eh, Meg?'

'I quite agree with you, friend.'

'I can be of no use to you'

'None whatever.'

'Then I'm off. You'll go a little way with me?'

'Yes, I'll see you to the hollow path: you'll be all right then.'

'Thanks; I shall be glad if you will, or I shall certainly lose myself again in this stupid wood, which I wish was at Jericho.'

'But when you cross the clearing,' added Meg, 'you must do so alone. We might meet a few late fugitives belonging to our ant-hill, and if I were seen with you—you understand?'

'O yes, I understand perfectly. You have only to follow me at a distance.'

'We might do better than that. You see that white trunk down there with the moonbeams shining upon it? It's a birch, and there's not another hereabouts. Go to it, and wait for me at the foot of it. I'll join you there.'

'All right,' I replied.

I set off in the direction indicated, taking care to avoid exposed places, and those too vividly lit up by the moon. On my way I had reason to recognise Meg's prudence, for I met an ant. The news that I was wandering about in the neighbourhood would therefore certainly be made known in the ant-hill. For myself, personally, I had nothing more to fear, for it was not to be supposed that the ants would leave home in the night to hunt for me; they would not have a chance of success if they did.

Arrived without difficulty at the foot of the birch, I there awaited Meg, who soon joined me.

We walked for some little distance without speaking. We had to make frequent detours to avoid stumps of trees, clumps of bracken, tufts of grass, and of other plants. But for Meg I should never have found my way out of the labyrinth; but she was quite at home

in the wood, and in spite of the darkness she advanced with the greatest confidence. All was silent and peaceful. I did not feel as nervous in the wood as I had done when I first entered it. That was doubtless the result of my feeling of security after the long hours of anxiety and fatigue I had had to go through.

We reached the hollow path without any adventures.

'I must leave you here,' said Meg; 'if you follow the hollow path you will get out of the wood. Where are you going to live?'

'I am quite undecided on that point,' I replied; 'but it will probably be in the strawberry-bed.'

'You will settle there permanently?'

'Yes, I think I shall; I have had enough of adventures. When I was underground I reflected very seriously, and I have resolved henceforth to lead the life of a hermit. My tastes incline me to a life of contemplation. The experiences of the last week have taught me many things, amongst others that there is no place like home. To-morrow I shall dig myself a comfortable little residence in some suitable locality, and I hope there to end my days in peace.'

'A delightful plan, truly; but are you not afraid of being dull all alone?'

'No, I don't think I shall be dull. I shall have plenty to think of for a long time. Remember what adventures I have had.'

'I tell you what,' laughed Meg; 'instead of thinking of them write them; then they may perhaps be useful to others.'

'Who can tell?'

'And now, friend, I must hasten back as quickly as I can. It is not for me to form plans for a peaceful life. Our positions are



also very different. I am one of a society, each member of which must contribute to the best of his or her ability to the common good. *Au revoir*, Cricket!

'To our next meeting, Meg!'

With that we separated. Shall I own that I felt deeply moved? But why should I not own it? The reader now knows me well enough not to be surprised at my agitation. I had known Meg but a few days, it is true; but in that short time she had given proof of sincere and ready friendship, in fact of positive devotion. And then the circumstances under which we had met led to as great an intimacy as if we had lived together for years. There are people who give their affections in return not for what they receive, but for the services they themselves render, and I am one of those people.

'Come, friend Cricket,' I said to myself, shaking myself and springing into the ravine, 'you are becoming quite a sentimentalist. It is the effect of the calmness of the night, the silence of the woods, and of the moonlight. Night-time still seems to affect your nerves, and in woods you are always either timid or sentimental. You know no medium. You had certainly better not settle in a wood.'

It would not have been prudent to follow the hollow path in the dead of the night, so I determined to go into the first crevice I came to, and remain there till the morning. The refuge I sought was soon found in the form of a projecting stone. I crept beneath it, and was soon wrapped in a peaceful dreamless sleep, such as I had not enjoyed for a long time.

At sunrise I resumed my journey, and arrived without accident

at the strawberry-bed. It was a fine morning, and I was in such good spirits that everything seemed *couleur de rose*. The incidents of the last few days, the emotions I had experienced when I first reached the ant-hill, the battle in which I had taken part, and my subterranean flight,—all seemed to me to be some terrible dream, and I was more than ever resolved henceforth to lead a calm and retired life.

I crossed the wild paddock to the rabbit-burrow, where I found everything as I had left it a few days previously. The stone beneath which I had taken refuge for several hours, and the gooseberry-bush which half overshadowed it, were both still there. But the spider was gone; only a few remains of her last web still hung upon the branches. What had become of her? Had she fallen a prey to some voracious bird? Had she perished in a struggle with a wasp, or had she again been the victim of a sphex? It was impossible to ascertain her fate.

Firefly had also disappeared.

I considerably enlarged the hole which I had already dug beneath the stone, and there I found the dead body of the staphylinus, which had been stupid enough to allow himself to be a second time surprised by the flood. As for the mole-cricket, I could obtain no tidings of her.

Meg came to visit me sometimes. She told me that after several battles, in which victory had been now on one side, now on the other, peace had been concluded, and that my supposed treason was forgotten.

The summer was succeeded in due course by the autumn, which gradually stripped the strawberry-bushes of their leaves and turned the foliage of the woods yellow.

Meg had once jokingly suggested that I should write my memoirs; later she alluded seriously to the matter; and it ended in my putting the idea into execution. I made

a collection of oak-leaves to serve as paper; and with a good deal of help from Meg I committed to writing the adventures you have just read.

THE END.



## SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

### CHAPTER XVII. THE LATERAL VALLEYS.

THE first and most beautiful of these lateral valleys is the Val d'Illiez, where Nature presents us with a combination of soft loveliness and colossal grandeur, and has favoured her children with a fertile soil, remarkable personal beauty, and the enjoyment of good health. The valley opens opposite Bex, and slopes gently up the sides of the Dent du Midi to the ice-clad mountains on the borders of Savoy. It contains the cheerful villages of Troistorrents, Illiez, and Champéry, all of which are pleasantly shaded by splendid chestnut and walnut trees, and are charmingly idyllic in character, while its mountains are covered with ancient oaks and dark fir-woods. Nowhere do the meadows look more resplendently and luxuriantly green. The slopes are bordered with chalets quite up to the top; below, the impetuous swift-rushing Viège thunders through the valley; and as we look back we have a view of the beautiful mountains of Bex, the Dent de Morcles, and the wild Diablerets. The people are lively and intelligent, and their manners are still pure and simple; and the valley, which is thoroughly pastoral in character, is one of the most beautiful in the canton. Those who care for something besides glaciers, and like to enjoy the peculiar pleasures of life among the Alps with some degree of comfort, will find an inexhaustible fund of enjoyment in the Val d'Illiez.

Better known, perhaps, however, is the Val d'Hérens, which lies in the heart of Valais, and possesses a glorious view of the glacier-world in the south. It begins at Sion, but soon branches into the western valley or vale of Hérémence, and the eastern or Eringer Thal, known also as the valley of Hérens. This latter divides again some way higher up, and the new fork is called the Val Arolla.

These valleys, as well as those of Einfisch, Turtmann, Bagne, Entremont, and the great valley of St. Nicholas, have all been formed by the streams which pour down from the great chain of Alps which extends from the massive group of Monte Rosa past the Matterhorn to the Grand Combin. The Val d'Hérens is watered by the Borgne; and Evolena, a mountain eyrie—brown, or rather black, with age—is the centre whence innumerable expeditions are made to the snowy mountains on the other side of the stream. On our way up hither from Sion we pass the village of Vex by a tolerable carriage-road recently constructed.

The queen of the mountains hereabouts is the Dent Blanche, who calmly surveys the landscape from the proud elevation of her throne of ice. The inn of Evolena is called in honour of her the Hôtel de la Dent Blanche, and deserves to be commended, though it is not always large enough to accommodate all the visitors who flock hither in



SKETCH IN THE VALLEY OF ZERMATT.

the summer. It is well adapted for summer quarters, and those who wish to study the native manners and customs of the mountaineers of Valais cannot do better than stay here for a time.

There are special opportunities for getting up the subject on holidays and feast-days, but even on weekdays the loneliness of the mountain-paths is often relieved by the figure of a woman riding on a mule; and on Sundays the whole population of the valley may be seen riding up to the surrounding heights.

Very charming excursions may be made to this spot; and those who wish to have the pleasure of gathering edelweiss and other rare Alpine flowers with their own hands, while they see their dreams of the Alps actually realised before their eyes, cannot do better than descend into the little valley of Arzinol, the one chosen abode of the nymph of whom the young cowherds talk enthusiastically as the source of all their good fortune.

But let us look away, and over the heads of all the other mountains, to the black Matterhorn. No matter where one may be, the eye reverts to it again and again, for it is the most singular in form and the boldest in outline of all the Alps, and as such is indelibly impressed upon the memory.

The Matterhorn, formerly called the Great Horn by the inhabitants of Zermatt, and also known under the names of Mont Cervin and Monte Silvio, stands at the back of the valleys of Zermatt and Tournanche, on the frontier of Italy and Switzerland, and attains a height of nearly fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The pinnacle itself, which rises from out the glaciers which cover the crest of the Alps of Valais, is some four thousand

feet in height, and is in form an obelisk with sharply-cut edges, and smooth, black, bare sides. Looking at it from Zermatt, one feels crushed and overpowered by its magnitude; and it may well seem utterly inaccessible to the puny beings who crawl around its base—indeed, it is difficult even now to understand how so many persons have succeeded in reaching its summit.

Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, is one of those who is said to have visited it. He is described as coming to the valley of the Visp, climbing the Matterhorn, and finding upon its summit a handsome town embowered among luxuriant vines and tall waving trees. Then the spirit of prophecy comes upon him, and he foretells its downfall, adding:

'Again, a third time, maybe I shall come,  
But I shall look in vain for these fair  
meads!

The blooming vines, the flowery vales,  
are gone—

A glacier makes a desert in their stead,  
Rears its white crags fantastic in mid-air,  
And rolls its dark-green billows down  
the slope!

Herds of the most beautiful chamois and wild goats live and feed together in the pastures, and besides these there are numbers of other strange and wonderful animals. Only one chamois hunter out of twenty can ever succeed in reaching this delightful region, and that only once in twenty years; but no one is allowed to bring any animal away with him. The names of many persons who have succeeded in getting there at different times are said to be cut upon the trunks of the trees.

On the 14th July 1865, Whymper, the boldest of all mountaineers, made the ascent from Zermatt, accompanied by Lord Francis Douglas, the Rev. Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Hadow, and succeeded in reaching the summit of the highest peak; but,

as if to justify the popular saying that only one chamois hunter in twenty ever reaches the top, Whymper's three companions paid for their daring with their lives. Their names are written in blood on the sides of the obelisk as a warning to all future generations; but the marvel is that even one should have lived to come down again. However, the ascent has been successfully made several times since 1865; and a girl of eighteen, bearing the auspicious name of Félicité, has set her foot on the brow of this most defiant of giants. Yes, 'the most defiant of giants,' for, compared with him, his neighbour Monte Rosa looks like a sublime monarch of the Alps, and wears his many-pointed crown with calm majesty and dignity. Monte Rosa rises to a height of fifteen thousand feet, extensive glaciers nestle at its feet, and it is enveloped in a snowy mantle of dazzling silvery brightness. Only two of its peaks stand actually on Italian soil; the others are on the frontier between Italy and Switzerland.

It is from the valley of Macugnaga that one gains the best idea of the size of this huge knot of mountains, which rises like a wall at the back of the upper valley. It is incontestably the mightiest of all the mighty giants which rear their snowy heads aloft in this neighbourhood; and, indeed, there is only one with which it cannot compare, namely, the great monarch of the Alps, Mont Blanc himself.

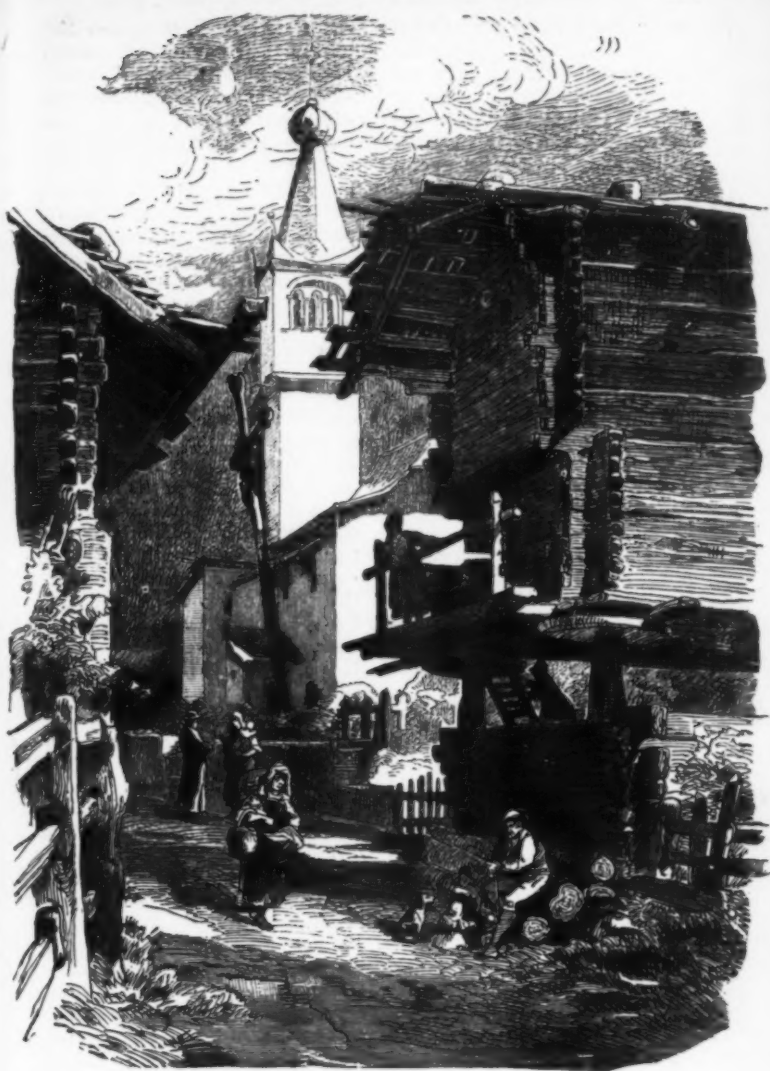
The place whence people now usually start on the numerous excursions which may be made around Monte Rosa is Zermatt (Praborgne in Italian), a village of the usual Valaisan type lying at the back of the valley of St. Nicholas. Its principal buildings are some first-class hotels, which

are always filled to overflowing during the season, and are patronised chiefly by our adventurous fellow-countrymen; but, as the longest summer is not long enough for the accomplishment of all the numerous expeditions which here present themselves in such tempting variety, the modest traveller will do well to confine himself to the beaten paths, which will amply reward him for all his exertions.

The first excursion made is usually that to the Gorner Grat and the Riffelberg, where there is a good mountain inn. The ascent from Zermatt takes us through a cool fragrant forest, and affords a splendid view of the Gorner glacier, whence the river Visp flows down into the valley. When we reach the Gorner Grat, higher up, the view becomes overpoweringly grand, and shows us alps, icebergs, snow-fields, precipices, and glacier after glacier. Yonder rise the peaks of the Cima di Jazzi and the Lyskamm, and there, above all, is Monte Rosa in all its glorious splendour. Between the black savage-looking Breithorn and the Lyskamm are the shining snow-covered peaks of Castor and Pollux; farther on are the Theodulshorn and Mont Cervin. Glaciers innumerable fill the valleys at their feet, and to the north rise the mighty mountains of the Bernese Oberland.

This is certainly the grandest scene in the immediate neighbourhood of Zermatt; and the other easy excursions to the Schwarzsee, the Hörnli, the Findel glacier, the Rothhorn, and Mettelhorn offer only variations of the one grand theme. On our descent through the beautiful valley of Zermatt we follow the course of the lively river Visp—through forests, by the side of lofty cliffs





VILLAGE OF TASCH.

enlivened by waterfalls, past glaciers which peep out over the trees in the distance, and past retired primeval-looking villages with old brown cottages—and as

we wend our way downwards we cast many a backward glance at the world of ice behind us.

These villages—Täsch, Randa, St. Nicholas, and Stalden—some

of which are picturesque enough, are not adapted for halting-places; they are not externally attractive, and the paths are bad. The great questions which agitate the world never penetrate to this secluded valley, and the experiences of its inhabitants are usually limited to eating, drinking, labouring, and dying; indeed, it is a matter of constant marvel that the little village of Grächen, between St. Nicholas and Stalden, should have produced a man who actually became to a certain extent famous. Every one knows the strange history of Thomas Platter, a genuine son of the sixteenth century, who, though only a poor goatherd and apprenticed to a rope-maker, was inflamed from early youth with an ardent enthusiasm for classical learning. As a boy, bare-footed and half starved, he would hide himself among the hemp to read his Pindar and Homer leaf by leaf. He went as a journeyman to Basel, where he became one of the most respected citizens, taught Greek and Hebrew, was made superintendent of the gymnasium, and was warmly in favour of the Reformation, though he never went to any passionate lengths in his advocacy of its principles. He attained the age of eighty-three, and his grandfather lived to be a hundred and twenty-six; whence it seems that the air of the valley of the Visp must be particularly conducive to longevity.

We shall not be much struck by the glacier of the Rhone if we visit it after the Aletsch glacier; but those who come to it direct from Lucerne and Altdorf, by way of Andermatt and the wildly beautiful Furca Pass, will be greatly delighted and surprised by the deep cerulean blue of the great jagged masses of ice which they will suddenly see on their right hand—so close that they

can almost touch them—as they pursue their way down the steep high-road into the upper valley of the Rhone. This glacier is distinguished for the purity of its ice and the beauty of its colour; and, in spite of all rivals, it is one of the most famous sights of Switzerland. To the man of science it is something more than this, for, being the best and longest known of all the glaciers, it has contributed greatly to the solution of various geological problems.

Travellers coming from the north who prefer to plunge at once *in medias res*, instead of beginning at the beginning of the Rhone valley, may come from lovely Thun through the rich and beautiful valley of Kanderthal, and may drive comfortably in their carriages through the Kandergrund to Kandersteg, where the valley comes to an end and the great wide world of mountains rears its formidable 'horns' before them. Here is the famous Gemmi Pass, the threshold both of the Bernese Oberland and the Rhone valley. A very beautiful mountain-path leads up from Kandersteg to the desolate region on the summit of the pass, and takes the traveller past the inn of Schwarenbach, which has acquired some notoriety as being the place chosen by Werner as the scene of a very gloomy tragedy. Farther on the path winds along the margin of the melancholy little lake of Dauben, which is three-quarters of a mile long and about half a mile broad, and is frozen nearly ten months of the year. Its waters are dull and lifeless, and the dreary waste around, unenlivened by anything more cheerful than the bleating of sheep and the croaking of jackdaws, is very dismal. Suddenly, however, as we pursue our way, a splendid



FALLS OF THE KANDER.

panorama is unfolded before us. We are standing on the brink of a stupendous precipice, and immediately below us, at a giddy depth, we see the baths of Leuk, and a little lower down a bit of the valley of the Rhone. Dumas says that when he reached this point, and looked into the depths below, the sight so overpowered him that he sank to the ground unconscious; and while he was making the descent his teeth chattered to such a degree that he was obliged to stuff his pocket-handker-

chief into his mouth; when he reached the bottom the said handkerchief looked as if it had been cut through and through with a razor.

Dumas' experiences, however, are, we believe, peculiar to himself, and have not, so far as we are aware, been shared by any, even the most nervous of lady travellers. The descent to Leuk is extremely interesting, but before we enter upon it we will take advantage of our elevated point of view to wave our farewells to the whole canton of Valais.

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#### CHAPTER XVIII. ITALIAN SWITZERLAND—FROM THE LAKES TO THE ST. GOTTHARD.

BETWEEN the glaciers of the High Alps and the sunny plain of Lombardy, bounded on the east by the vale of the Adda, and on the west by that of the Doire, lies the lake district of Italy—a region of light and sunshine, endowed with all the charms that captivate the eye and rejoice the heart—a veritable garden, where the products of the chilly north and the luxuriant south meet and flourish equally.

Into this fertile region stretches the southern part of the Swiss canton of Tessin, or Ticino, which lies between the Lago Maggiore and the Lago di Como, and almost encloses the Lake of Lugano. Here the oppressive relaxing heat of the Lombard plain becomes more temperate, though the sunshine loses nothing of its brilliancy, and its fertilising powers seem to be doubled. Umbrageous woods of deciduous trees clothe all the hills and mountains, while the slopes are covered with nut-trees, chestnuts, and vine-clad mulberry-trees; the fields and meadows show signs of exuberant fertility, and the gardens are bright with the rosy blossoms of

the peach and almond in the spring-time, and yield an abundant supply of golden-hued figs in the summer. Such are the characteristics of the southern part of the canton, which extends to and includes Locarno, on the Lake of Maggiore, and Bellinzona, on the river Ticino. Beyond these places the country soon begins to assume a less genial aspect, and we enter upon the Alpine district of Ticino, with its precipitous heights, wild waterfalls, and frequent glimpses of glaciers. Southern vegetation and Italian-looking towns and villages are left behind; Nature becomes more chary of her gifts, or refuses to bestow them at all, except as the reward of laborious toil; poverty is rampant, and the people are generally too indolent to cope vigorously with it.

The canton takes its name from the river Tessin, or Ticino, the Ticinus of the ancients; but the part of the river between Bellinzona and the mouth of the Val Blegno is called the Riviera, and it is along the Riviera that the population of the canton is chiefly settled.

The world-renowned road of the St. Gotthard runs along by the side of the Ticino through a valley which abounds in gorges, wild-looking rocks, waterfalls, and the most picturesque and beautiful scenery. This is probably all that the summer tourist will see of the northern portion of the canton, as the Val Maggio, a valley which lies parallel with the Val Ticino on the west, is seldom visited. To most persons the canton of Ticino means the St. Gotthard Pass, Airolo, Faido, Biasca, Bellinzona, Locarno, and Lugano; and when they have seen these, they have seen the principal places of interest.

From the terrace of the church of St. Lawrence, which is situated on an eminence above the town, there is a fine view of the lake. The most conspicuous object on our left hand is Monte Brè, which rises to the north-east of Lugano, and is backed by the loftier Monte Boglia; the lake winds round its base to Porlezza. Opposite us, the foreground is occupied by Monte Caprino, whose cool grottoes are used as wine-cellars by the townspeople; its slopes are covered with lime-trees and young chestnuts, and behind it rises the Colmo di Creccio, while farther off still we can just catch the twin summits of the Monte Generoso. To the right is the famous cone-shaped mountain of San Salvatore, from the top of which the view is equally lovely and far more extensive. San Salvatore stands on a sort of peninsula; for the lake, after running south as far as Morcote, turns sharp round to the north, and proceeds in this direction as far as Agno, which is almost in a line with Lugano; and between these two towns lies the little Lake of Muzzano.

This Lago di Lugano, or Lago Ceresio, as the Luganesi them-

selves call it, seems to be always smiling at the sky. The sky is almost always blue, and so is the water; and the white sails of the fishing-boats which glide over its surface scarcely disturb its dream-like repose. Its shores are fanned by the most delicious breezes, and if the chilly *tramontana* prevails at night, its place is taken by the softly breathing *brega* in the daytime. Generally speaking, the climate is temperate, and the rude stormy winds known as the *porzellina* and *marino* seldom blow. It is no wonder that those whose chief object is to enjoy themselves quietly and without much exertion should love to linger on the shores of this lake, for its charms are numerous and varied, and the Hôtel du Parc, formerly a convent, which stands close to the water's edge, and is surrounded by trees, is a very pleasant place for a protracted sojourn. Visitors are constantly to be seen sitting in the balconies, and are apparently never weary of gazing out over the sparkling waters at the blue mountains in the distance. Others take one of the hotel-boats and row across the lake, sometimes to a villa or tiny village, sometimes to some of the beautiful gardens and groves which fringe its margin, and sometimes to the celebrated wine-cellars of Monte Caprino. Those who are of a more restless turn of mind will find plenty of longer excursions to satisfy them: the steamers Ceresio and Generoso will lend them the aid of their wings, and the railway will convey them, in the shortest possible space of time, either into Italy or to Melide, Maroggia, Capolago, or to Mendrisio, the garden of Italian Switzerland, which lies on the high-road to Como and Milan. Besides all this, they may, if they please, make the ascent of Monte Generoso, or Gionnero, the Rigi

of Italian Switzerland, which is daily becoming more famous. The people of Lugano have a saying with regard to this mountain, which runs as follows: 'Senseless is he who does not desire to see it, and senseless is he who, having seen, does not admire it; more senseless still is the man who, having seen and admired it, goes away and leaves it.' But there is a great deal closer at hand which is well worthy of a visit, and within easy walking, riding, or driving distance; in fact, the attractions of the neighbourhood are simply inexhaustible, and people who go hence to Locarno often think regretfully of the paradise they have left behind them on the Ceresio.

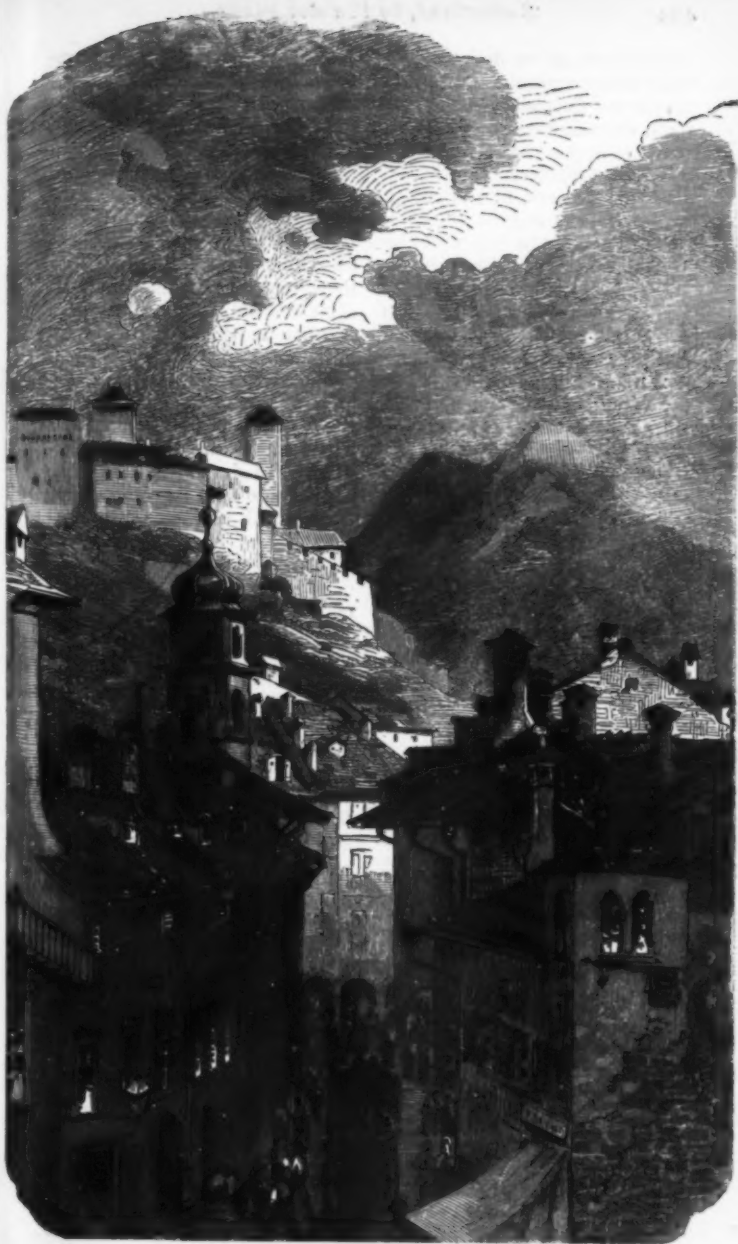
Yet Locarno is situated on the Lago Maggiore, and all our ideas as to the beauty of Italian scenery are commonly associated with the name of this lake. And it must be confessed that Locarno is beautiful; but we miss the fresh honest air and delightful climate of Lugano, where the warm breath of the south wind is so deliciously tempered by breezes blowing straight down from the Alps. Locarno is like a snake lurking amid the roses and fruits, which grow here in such rich profusion as to remind one of the garden of the Hesperides. Nowhere do trees of all descriptions grow more luxuriantly than on the Locarno shore, but the entire locality is a prey to the malaria, which is bred in the extensive marshes of the Ticino, and spreads its leaden wings over the whole northern shore of the lake. Can it be owing to the malaria that the town of Locarno has always hitherto seemed to be in a state of retrogression?

It is hard to turn one's back on all the glorious beauty of Italy; but we have to wend our way homewards, and must therefore

turn our steps towards Bellinzona, where the canton of Ticino ceases to be Italian for those coming from the south, and begins to be Italian for those arriving by the St. Gotthard road.

Bellinzona itself is a thoroughly Italian town, and its aspect is grand and striking as we look down upon it from the slopes of Monte Cenero and see it standing on the banks of the broad Ticino, in the midst of the most beautiful and garden-like scenery. The extensive valley in which it is situated was anciently known as the Campi Canini. Its battlemented walls and the three old castles, known respectively as the Castle of Uri, or Castello Grande, the Castello di Svitto, and the Castle of Unterwalden, give the place almost an air of defiance when viewed from a distance; but this disappears speedily upon a closer and more intimate acquaintance. Indeed, the town resembles some old statue overgrown with roses and creepers, round which the children laugh and play and gather flowers, without bestowing a thought upon their ancient ancestor. There is nothing in Bellinzona to inspire fear or awe nowadays. The sound of the war trumpet has given place to the song of the herdsman and the ritornello of the street-boy, and the cicada hums its summer song in profoundest peace where once the clash of arms was frequently to be heard. There are many beautiful views to be seen from the neighbouring vineyards, which are reached by shady paths through groves and thickets. On the cliffs of Corvaro, overshadowed by trees, stands a lonely little church dedicated to the Madonna, which contains a whole world of poetry within its four walls. There are a few villages and a good many scattered houses upon these





BELLINZONA.

heights, and if we desire to become better acquainted with the people and their manners and customs, we shall have a good opportunity of doing so here. And now we proceed still farther north, and along the Riviera, or Reviertal, as the Italians and Germans respectively call the valley of the Ticino. Between Bellinzona and Biasca the Italian echoes grow fainter and fainter; but the roads are still bordered by vineyards, and the granite pillars which support the trellised vines, as well as the peach, almond, and fig trees, still occasionally remind us of the south. These, however, are presently succeeded by nut-trees, cherry-trees, alders growing by the water-side, and plantations of pines on the mountains; and by the time we reach Biasca the snowy mountains are once more towering over our heads. The streams, too, become more voluminous and impetuous, the Frodabach forms a considerable waterfall—and, in fact, it was the rocks and floods together which wrought such terrible havoc here in 1512. It was a wealthy and prosperous district then, thanks to the German part of the population; but it is so no longer, and the numerous villages along the road and upon the heights are best seen from a distance. If one goes too near, one finds that they are dismal dens, with extraordinarily narrow streets, and full of filthy puddles; and the few stone houses they contain look slovenly and ill-kept for the most part. The wooden houses are small and ugly—the front being of wood and the back of stone, and the roof covered with shingle. The first-floor is reached by an outside staircase, which leads at once into the kitchen, and this again into the small low living-room, whence almost all air and light are ex-

cluded. These dwellings are unbearably hot in the summer, and in winter they are stifling; for the whole family eat, drink, sleep, and work in this confined space, and the window is never opened. There is little that is attractive about these villages, though vanity has induced them to embellish, to a certain extent, that side which they turn towards the road; yet even here the evidences of Italian frivolity are too marked to be mistaken.

We are now in the Val Leventina, a valley which extends from the junction of the Brenno and Ticino, at Biasca, up to the St. Gotthard, and is enlivened by the river Ticino with its companions, as well as by the great St. Gotthard road. It contains about twenty villages, and is generally divided into three districts, known respectively as the Upper, Middle, and Lower Valley; the boundary of the Upper Valley being marked by Airolo and Quinto, that of the others by Faido and Giornico. The valley, taken as a whole, is by no means the abode of wealth, and when the traffic along the St. Gotthard road does not afford them sufficient employment, the men usually go and seek their fortunes abroad. The women work in the fields and meadows, or sit in their dismal little rooms weaving; but a good many of them follow the example of the men, and leave their homes for foreign lands. Whether the future will improve matters is a question; for the railway, when it comes, will only hurry travellers through the valley faster than they go at present, and the inhabitants will have nothing to do but to gaze after them. If the future has nothing good in store for them, the past has certainly left them little but sorrowful memories; and even the grand natural memorial of the

'Sassi Grossi' (Great Rocks) at Giornico, which commemorates a victory gained over their enemies, reminds them at the same time that this very victory only helped to strengthen the hands of their subsequent oppressors, the cow-herds of Uri. The people of the Val Leventina were at war just then with Milan; and Count Marsiglio Torello, who had been sent against them at the head of fifteen thousand men, a large body of cavalry, and a good deal of artillery, had advanced as far as the bridge of Biasca. There he found a number of the peasants awaiting him; but they made a feint of retreating when he approached, and drew him on to the flat ground between Bodio and Giornico, where Stanga, their captain, had made every preparation for the reception of the ducal troops. This part of the valley had been purposely laid under water, and, as it was now the month of November, one night's sharp frost was sufficient to convert the whole surface into a sheet of hard ice. The dalesmen, only a few hundred in number, took up a position on the cliffs above, and as the troops approached, they first rolled huge masses of rocks down upon them from the slopes, and then charged furiously upon them. An utter rout ensued; several thousands of the enemy were slain, their guns and arms fell into the hands of the victors, and they fled down the Riviera in dire confusion, pursued by the Ticinesi, who took a great number of them prisoners. The men of the Val Leventina distinguished themselves greatly on this occasion, and Stanga, their captain, returned home, when the fight was over, only to die on the threshold of the numerous wounds he had received.

At Faido there are a number of

beautiful old chestnut-trees, which remind us that there is another side to the picture we have just drawn. It must be confessed, indeed, that the unfortunate valley was most haughtily treated by its masters, the men of Uri. In all their intercourse with these latter, the dalesmen were required to address them as '*Illustrissimi e potentissimi signori e padroni nostri clementissimi*'—'Most illustrious and most mighty lords, and our most merciful masters,' while they dared not speak of themselves except as '*Umilissimi e fedelissimi servitori e sudditi*'—'Most humble and faithful servants and subjects.'

Such being the state of things, but little was needed to kindle the smouldering flames of insurrection, and in 1755 a premature attempt was made to shake off the Swiss yoke. It failed, however, for want of proper management, and the men of Uri and their confederates, who had come across the St. Gotthard Pass, quickly crushed the rebellion. The people of the Val Leventina were summoned to appear at Faido on the 2d of June, and they came, three thousand of them, with shame for the past and fear for the future in their faces. They were surrounded by the Confederate troops, and compelled, bare-headed and on bended knees, to swear unconditional obedience to their masters; and in the same posture they were made to witness the execution of their leaders, who were hanged on the very chestnut-trees we see before us. Horror-stricken and sad at heart, the dalesmen returned to their miserable huts, to find themselves in a state of worse bondage than before.

There is something gloomy and dismal about the face of the whole country here. It looks as if there were a curse upon it; and the peo-

ple themselves are grave and silent, as is only natural in those who are the heirs of such a dreary past, and have grown up in perpetual conflict with the powers of Nature.

Above Faudo the Ticino rushes with demoniacal fury through a narrow passage, which it forced for itself ages ago in the Monte Piottino or Platifer. To describe its mad raging impetuosity is simply impossible, for it is unlike anything else. The road is carried along close above the boiling waters, which will be spanned by a railway-bridge before long.

And now the scenery becomes grander and wilder every step we take forward, and the cliffs advance nearer and nearer, threatening to bar the traveller's farther progress. We pass the poor little hamlet of Piotta, which lies on a mountain-slope close to a wild-looking ravine on the other side of the road; then we reach Airolo, at the entrance of the Val Tremola—or Trümmelthal, as the Germans call it—and then the real ascent to the St. Gotthard begins. The great St. Gotthard tunnel will terminate at Airolo, and this gigantic work has greatly contributed to the prosperity of the village for years past.

The Italian element is very strong in Airolo; and one fancies that the stream of intending emigrants who proposed to cross the Alps at this point were suddenly arrested by finding that they might make money here without going any farther. It is here that the corkscrew windings of the St. Gotthard road begin, and from here to Hospenthal, in the Vale of Urseren, the traveller has no opportunity of buying anything he may require on his journey, except at the humble hospice. Accordingly, there has always been a great demand here for

small wares of all sorts, and for porters, agents, stables, relays of horses, and taverns, as well as for such handicraftsmen as smiths, saddlers, and wheelwrights; and all these various needs are just what the Ticinese is capable of supplying. Airolo, therefore, was a very flourishing place even in the days when the only road across the St. Gotthard was but a bridle-path, and that a bad one; for sixteen thousand travellers and some ten thousand beasts of burden naturally required that some sort of provision should be made for their various needs. The great new road of course made many changes, however, and the new railway, when completed, will not have much to do with Airolo; so that one fears its present prosperity can be but short-lived, and must be doomed to gradual decay.

At Airolo the ascent begins in the pleasantest manner through rich green meadows; and the pedestrian, as he follows the short cuts made by the old road, can see the innumerable twists and turns of the newer and easier road, which looks at a distance like an uncoiled rope flung across the mountain, or, as Rogers says:

‘Like a silver zone

Flung about carelessly, it shines afar,  
Catching the eye in many a broken link,  
In many a turn and traverse as it glides.’

On fine bright days we enter even the Val Tremola, or Tremiora (the Vale of Trembling), without the least feeling of apprehension; though, when we have crossed the bridge which takes us once more to the right bank of the Ticino, we are close to Madonna ai Leit, San Giuseppe, St. Antonio, and il Buco dei Calanchetti, spots which are all of them in very ill repute for one reason or other. The last-mentioned, for instance, derives its name from a party of glaziers who all perished



BRIDGE OVER THE TICINO AT FAIDO.

here when on their way back from France to their homes in the valley of Calanca. They had insisted on leaving the safe shelter of the Hospice and continuing their journey, in spite of all the warnings given them, and were buried in the snow. All this part of the road, but even more that on the other side of the Hospice, is exposed in winter to frequent snowstorms, called *tourmentes* or *guzen* by the Swiss, and *kisses* by the people of the Val Leventina—kisses given by the fiend-like tramontana which too often end in death.

A very dreary region it is in the midst of which the Hospice stands—a cold, desolate, barren plateau, about three miles long, thickly covered with weather-beaten blocks of granite. As far as the eye can reach not a single speck of green is to be seen, for we are surrounded on all sides by a wall of steep snow-covered heights. The streams are arrested in their course, uncertain apparently whether they shall flow north or south, and accordingly here, as on most mountain-passes, they have formed various little ponds and lakes, which are abundantly fringed with flowers in the height of summer, but are otherwise entirely devoid of any signs of life, and are surrounded by nothing but broken rocks heaped together in the wildest confusion. The best known of these lakes are the Lago Sella and Lago Scuro, which are elevated some six thousand odd feet above the level of the Mediterranean. One of the principal feeders of the river Reuss forms the outlet of the Lago Sella, the Lago Scuro being drained by the wild torrent which rushes down the Val Tremola. Some twenty other lakes, larger and smaller, lie hidden in different parts of this dreary rock-

strewn wilderness. One of the larger and better known of these is the Lago Lucendro, which is fed by the waters of the Lucendro glacier and drained into the river Reuss. None of them are ever free from ice for more than three months of the year at the outside, and their appearance is in perfect harmony with the wild chill-looking landscape, which seems to be rendered only more gloomy and sad by the presence of these dull expanses of dead-looking blue-green water.

The most noteworthy peaks around—none of which, be it observed, bears the name of St. Gotthard—are the Pizzo Centrale, or Tritthorn, which is now often ascended, Monte Prosa, the Fibbia, Pizzo Lucendro, and Piz Orsino, none of which is quite ten thousand feet in height, though some come very near it, and all are considerably over eight thousand feet.

The history of the St. Gotthard Pass and its Hospice is long and interesting, though it does not go back as far as one might be led by its present world-wide fame to expect. Our first trustworthy information concerning it dates from the fourteenth century, and is furnished by the famous Father Placido a Specha. In the records of the convent of Disentis, which were afterwards destroyed by fire, he had seen it mentioned that there was a hospice at the foot of the mountain in 1300, that merchandise was conveyed across the pass in 1321, and that in 1374 the abbot of the aforesaid convent—which at that time owned the alpine pastures of Fortunei, Rodunt, and Lucendro—had caused a hospice and chapel to be built on the summit of the pass. In 1431, when many of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the time were passing through on their way to





HOSPICE ON THE ST. GOTTHARD.



the council then being held at Basel, a certain Canon Ferrario was sent up to the hospice to attend to them. This was not for long, however; and later on, when the convent had handed over the pastures just mentioned to the village of Airolo, the same place was laid under an obligation to keep up the little institution on the mountain-pass.

St. Carlo Borromeo had intended to build a considerable house on the spot, but was prevented by death from carrying out his designs. In 1602 Friedrich Borromäus sent an ecclesiastic thither, and in 1629 he had a house built there, but this was deserted from 1648 to 1682. The hospice of the Capuchins was first established in 1683, through the instrumentality of Cardinal Visconti. A hundred years later it was destroyed by avalanches, was rebuilt and again destroyed—this time by the French, who lay encamped here from 1799 to 1800, and, to supply their want of fuel, burnt up all the woodwork the buildings contained. Money being scarce, a very humble little hospice for poor travellers was first erected, and this gradually developed into the present grand group of buildings.

Such has been the history of the pass in times of peace; but it has known something of war as well, and the date of the year 1799 is inscribed in its records in letters of flaming red, for at that time the pass was the scene of a des-

perate struggle between Russia, Austria, and France. However, this is all too well known to need repetition, and every traveller who has crossed the St. Gotthard knows the story attached to the inscription, 'Suwarow victor,' still to be read on the granite rocks at the upper end of the Val Tremola.

And now, without further delay, we must follow the downward course of the Reuss to the beautiful peaceful valley below, with its green undulating pastures and silvery river; with here the pleasant little village of Hospenthal and its characteristic ruin, and farther on the imposing village of Andermatt, overshadowed by its beautiful wood of pine-trees.

Here we may take our choice of two or three different routes. If we proceed through the tunnel known as the Urnerloch, or Hole of Uri, and across the Devil's Bridge, we shall find ourselves once more by the Lake of Lucerne, while the road to the west, over the Realp and Furca Pass, will in a few hours take us back to Valais; so we must strike out in a new direction, and make for the pass of the Oberalp. And who shall be our leader? Old 'Father Rhine' himself!—

'The wide and winding Rhine,  
Whose breast of waters broadly swells  
Between the banks which bear the vine,  
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,  
And fields which promise corn and wine,  
And scattered cities crowning these,  
Whose far white walls along them shine.'  
*Childe Harold.*

(To be continued.)

## THROUGH THE DARK CONTINENT.\*

HONOURS have fallen thick upon the prematurely gray head of the man whom Sir Rutherford Alcock, speaking as the mouthpiece of the Royal Geographical Society, lately eulogised as 'not only one of the most daring and adventurous of explorers, but as one of the most intelligent and observant of geographers.' Europe, Africa, and America have flattered him with their distinctions, and the whole world has almost unanimously conspired to applaud him. Illustrious individuals and learned societies have handsomely intimated to him their appreciation of his services to science and civilisation. Kings, rulers, and princes have accorded him the meed of personal recognition; governments have officially approved of his achievements; and public favour has been nearly coextensive with his reputation. Nearly, but not altogether; for Mr. Stanley professes to know, to his bitter cost, that the rule of his conduct in Africa has not been understood by all. 'But,' to use his own words, 'with my conscience at ease, and the simple record of my daily actions, which I now publish, to speak for me, this misunderstanding on the part of a few presents itself to me only as one more harsh experience of life. And those who read my book will

\* *Through the Dark Continent; or the Sources of the Nile, around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa, and down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean.* By Henry M. Stanley, author of 'How I found Livingstone,' 'Coomassie and Magdala,' 'My Kalulu,' &c. 2 vols. (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Riving-

know that I have indeed had "a sharp apprehension and keen intelligence" of many such experiences.'

Certainly, having regard to the paternal tenderness with which Mr. Stanley watched over the welfare of his followers, his accusers must in fairness do their best to acquit him of the charge of needless bloodshed or wanton aggression on the natives whose hostility, if he could not disarm, he was bound to combat as the only alternative to the curtailment of his expedition.

Through long ages Africa has been emphatically a 'dark continent': dark in the sable complexion of its inhabitants, in the degradation of its social systems, the grovelling fear of its superstitions, the cruel savagery of its religions; dark in the deadly inhospitality of its climate, in the dreariness of its deserts, in the ferocity of its beasts of prey and the huge terror of its reptiles; and dark, finally, in the depths of its unexplored strangeness. Yet in many respects its darkness is beginning to disperse; and our author is one of the last of African travellers to whose work such a title as he has given to the stirring volumes before us will not be a misnomer. Already the golden threads of ascertained routes are to be recognised through the retreating gloom; and in centres of varied activity the pioneers of trade and the preachers of Christianity are severally or conjointly labouring, under the auspices of many of the states

of Europe, in the task of redeeming what, from the time of Herodotus, has been a land of mystery and the shadow of death, to the light of a sublimer faith, the trust of a larger hope, and the life of a quickened commerce, of more merciful government and more genial institutions.

The European *personnel* of Mr. Stanley's expedition was limited to three, Frederick Barker, Francis John Pocock, and Edward Pocock, —all of whose names have now to be inscribed on the roll of martyrs to African exploration, two of them having perished of fever, and the third, Frank Pocock, having fallen a victim to his rash confidence in the tender mercies of the 'whirling flying waters' of the falls of Massassa. Barker was a clerk at the Langham Hotel, whose resolute determination to go to Africa was not to be shaken by Mr. Stanley's adverse and faithful representations; and the Pococks, two adventurous lads of eager courage and devotion, were sons of a worthy fisherman of Lower Upnor, Kent, whose knowledge of river navigation, as practised by the watermen of the Medway and the Thames, was likely to be suggestive of resources on the streams and broader waters of Equatorial Africa.

It was not for want of enterprise on the part of other candidates that Mr. Stanley's civilised companionship was thus circumscribed; for he pleasantly states that,

"Soon after the announcement of the 'New Mission,' applications by the score poured into the offices of the *Daily Telegraph* and *New York Herald* for employment. Before I sailed from England over 1200 letters were received from "generals," "colonels," "captains," "lieutenants," "midshipmen," "engineers," "commissioners of hotels," mechanics, waiters, cooks, servants, somebodies and nobodies, spiritual mediums and magnetisers, &c. &c. They all knew Africa, were perfectly

acclimatised, were quite sure they would please me, would do important services, save me from any number of troubles by their ingenuity and resources, take me up in balloons or by flying carriages, make us all invisible by their magic arts, or by the "science of magnetism" would cause all savages to fall asleep while we might pass anywhere without trouble. Indeed I feel sure that, had enough money been at my disposal at that time, I might have led 5000 Englishmen, 5000 Americans, 2000 Frenchmen, 2000 Germans, 500 Italians, 250 Swiss, 200 Belgians, 50 Spaniards, and 5 Greeks, or 15,005 Europeans, to Africa. But the time had not arrived to depopulate Europe, and colonise Africa on such a scale, and I was compelled to respectfully decline accepting the valuable services of the applicants, and to content myself with Francis John and Edward Pocock, and Frederick Barker, whose entreaties had been seconded by his mother on my return from America.

I was agreeably surprised also, before departure, at the great number of friends I possessed in England, who testified their friendship substantially by presenting me with useful "tokens of their regard" in the shape of canteens, watches, water-bottles, pipes, pistols, knives, pocket companions, manifold writers, cigars, packages of medicine, Bibles, prayer-books, English tracts for the dissemination of religious knowledge among the black pagans, poems, tiny silk banners, gold rings, &c. &c. A lady for whom I have a reverent respect presented me also with a magnificent prize mastiff named "Castor," an English officer presented me with another, and at the Dogs' Home at Battersea I purchased a retriever, a bull-dog, and a bull-terrier, called respectively by the Pococks "Nero," "Bull," and "Jack."

When, however, Mr. Stanley set out from Bagamoyo for the interior on the 17th of November 1874, his following comprised some 356 souls, consisting, besides Europeans and gun-bearers, of 20 chiefs, 12 guides, 270 porters, 36 women, and 10 boys, children of some of the chiefs and boat-bearers, following their mothers and assisting them with trifling loads of utensils. Of these, forming, as they left the coast opposite Zanzibar, a lengthy line which occupied nearly half a mile of the path which is at the present day the commercial and exploring highway into the lake regions, 108—men, women, and children

—returned with Mr. Stanley to Zanzibar in November 1877, including tiny infants, who, in the course of the expedition, had been 'ushered into the world amid the dismal and tragic scenes of the cataract lands.' Including the three Europeans, no fewer than 173 members of the 'Anglo-American Expedition' succumbed to the chances and disasters of inter-tropical pilgrimage. The casualties were represented by being lost in the jungle, lost through insanity, death from childbirth, from smoking *cannabis sativa* or wild hemp, from typhoid fever and African fever, and from being caught by a crocodile, one each; infantile debility, heart-disease, low fever, general debility, clear scurvy, ulcers, and overdoses of opium, were fatal to two each; five were arrested by natives and condemned for stealing; nine perished of starvation; fourteen were drowned; twenty-one died of dysentery, and forty-five of small-pox; and fifty-eight were either slain in battle, killed in the bush, or otherwise murdered. It is not for nothing, therefore, that Mr. Stanley, speaking with reference to the distinctions of which he has lately been the recipient, should interrupt his self-gratulation with a short paragraph for the relief of his feelings and in lamentation and praise of the dead.

'Alas, that to share this pride and these honours there are left to me none of those gallant young Englishmen who started from this country to cross the Dark Continent, and who endeared themselves to me by their fidelity and affection! Alas, that to enjoy the exceeding pleasure of rest among friends, after months of fighting for dear life among cannibals and cataracts, there are left so few of those brave Africans to whom, as the willing hands and the loyal hearts of the expedition, so much of its success was due!'

The task to which Mr. Stanley addressed himself was the solution of the several geographical prob-

lems left by his gallant predecessors in African travel; to supplement the incomplete discoveries of Burton and Speke, Speke and Grant, and Dr. Livingstone. In the course of his researches he circumnavigated the Victoria Nyanza, from the north-western shore of which he penetrated to Beatrice Gulf, the broad north-eastern arm of the lake Muta N'zigé, from whence partially returning he arrived by a circuitous southerly route at Ujiji, on Lake Tanganika, the shores of which he explored before attempting that wonderful voyage down the Congo—hereafter, if his wish is to be recognised by geographers, to be known as the Livingstone River—upon which it has been said that his fame as a geographical pioneer will substantially depend. Of this 'comprehensive exploration, lasting, from sea to sea, two years eight months and twenty days,' the results are to be found embodied in the two volumes before us, which are rendered as intelligible as splendid and minute maps and plentiful illustrations can make them. With the principal events and the general lines of Mr. Stanley's expedition the world has been made from time to time familiar by means of the letters published in the columns of an enterprising contemporary; and the bare itinerary of so stupendous an excursion would more than exhaust the space we have at our disposal. We propose, therefore, to select from his narrative some of those passages and descriptions which are conversant about the more salient events of his journey, and which throw light upon the character of the rulers and the peoples of the different regions he visited, as well as upon the physical features of the country where-in they dwell.

Those of our readers who remember the high-bred and dignified courtesy of the Sultan of Zanzibar, Barghash bin Sayid, during his visit to England three years ago, will be glad to have their reminiscences of him refreshed by the justly favourable tribute to his loyalty and philanthropy placed on record by Mr. Stanley.

'It is impossible not to feel a kindly interest in Prince Barghash, and to wish him complete success in the reforms he is now striving to bring about in his country. Here we see an Arab prince, educated in the strictest school of Islam, and accustomed to regard the black natives of Africa as the lawful prey of conquest or lust, and fair objects of barter, suddenly turning round at the request of European philanthropists and becoming one of the most active opponents of the slave-trade—and the spectacle must necessarily create for him many well-wishers and friends.

Though Prince Barghash has attributed to myself the visit of those ships of war under Admiral Cumming, all who remember that period, and are able, therefore, to trace events, will not fail to perceive that the first decided steps taken by the British Government for the suppression of the slave-trade on the east coast of Africa were due to the influence of Livingstone's constant appeals. Some of his letters, they will remember, were carried by me to England, and the sensation caused by them was such as to compel the British Government to send Sir Bartle Frere in the *Enchantress*, as a special envoy to Zanzibar, to conclude a treaty with Prince Barghash. When the Prince's reluctance to sign became known, the fleet under Admiral Cumming made its appearance before Zanzibar, and by a process of gentle coercion, or rather quiet demonstration, the signature of the Prince was at last obtained. One thing more, however, still remained to be done before the treaty could be carried into full effect, and that was to eradicate any feeling of discontent or sullenness from his mind which might have been created by the exhibition of force, and this, I was happy to see, was effected by the hospitable reception he enjoyed in England in 1875. There was a difference in the manner and tone of the Sultan of 1874 and of 1877, that I can only attribute to the greater knowledge he had gained of the grandeur of the power which he had so nearly provoked. We must look upon him now as a friendly and, I believe, sincere ally, and as a man willing to do his utmost for the suppression of the slave-trade.'

After a series of adventures which almost pall on the reader

from the very wealth and surprises of their variety, Mr. Stanley found himself, early in April 1875, the honoured guest of Mtesa, Kabaka, or Emperor of Uganda, the 'foremost man of Equatorial Africa.'

'In person Mtesa is tall, probably 6 feet 1 inch, and slender. He has very intelligent and agreeable features, reminding me of some of the faces of the great stone images at Thebes, and of the statues in the museum at Cairo. He has the same fulness of lips, but their grossness is relieved by the general expression of amiability blended with dignity that pervades his face, and the large, lustrous, lambent eyes that lend it a strange beauty, and are typical of the race from which I believe him to have sprung. His colour is of a dark red brown, of a wonderfully smooth surface. When not engaged in council, he throws off unreservedly the bearing that characterises him when on the throne, and gives rein to his humour, indulging in hearty peals of laughter. He seems to be interested in the discussion of the manners and customs of European courts, and to be enamoured of hearing of the wonders of civilisation. He is ambitious to imitate as much as lies in his power the ways of the white man. When any piece of information is given him, he takes upon himself the task of translating it to his wives and chiefs, though many of the latter understand the Swahili language as well he does himself.

I see that Mtesa is a powerful Emperor, with great influence over his neighbours. I have to-day seen the turbulent Manikorongo, king of Usui and Mirambo, that terrible phantom who disturbs men's minds in Unyamwezi through their embassies kneeling and tendering their tribute to him. I saw over 3000 soldiers of Mtesa nearly half civilised. I saw about a hundred chiefs who might be classed in the same scale as the men of Zanzibar and Oman, clad in as rich robes, and armed in the same fashion, and have witnessed with astonishment such order and law as is obtainable in semi-civilised countries. All this is the result of a poor Muslim's labour, his name is Muley bin Salim. He it was who first began teaching here the doctrines of Islam. False and contemptible as these doctrines are, they are preferable to the ruthless instincts of a savage despot, whom Speke and Grant left wallowing in the blood of women, and I honour the memory of Muley bin Salim—Muslim and slave-trader though he be—the poor priest who has wrought this happy change. With a strong desire to improve still more the character of Mtesa, I shall begin building on the foundation stones laid by Muley bin Salim. I shall destroy his belief in Islam, and teach the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth.'

Mr. Stanley presents the following picture of his methods as a missionary; and the sketch is quaintly reminiscent of the *bonhomie* of the evangelistic efforts of Defoe's great Christian hero and vagabond, 'Robinson Crusoe:'

'Since the 5th April, I had enjoyed ten interviews with Mtesa, and during all I had taken occasion to introduce topics which would lead up to the subject of Christianity. Nothing occurred in my presence but I contrived to turn it towards effecting that which had become an object to me, viz. his conversion. There was no attempt made to confuse him with the details of any particular doctrine. I simply drew for him the image of the Son of God humbling Himself for the good of all mankind, white and black, and told him how, while He was in man's disguise, He was seized and crucified by wicked people who scorned His divinity, and yet out of His great love for them, while yet suffering on the cross, He asked His great Father to forgive them. I showed the difference in character between Him whom white men love and adore, and Mohammed, whom the Arabs revere; how Jesus endeavoured to teach mankind that we should love all men, excepting none, while Mohammed taught his followers that the slaying of the pagan and the unbeliever was an act that merited Paradise. I left it to Mtesa and his chiefs to decide which was the worthier character. I also sketched in brief the history of religious belief from Adam to Mohammed. I had also begun to translate to him the Ten Commandments, and Idi, the Emperor's writer, transcribed in Kiganda the words of the Law as given to him in choice Swahili by Robert Feruzi, one of my boat's crew, and a pupil of the Universities Mission at Zanzibar.

The enthusiasm with which I launched into this work of teaching was soon communicated to Mtesa and some of his principal chiefs, who became so absorbingly interested in the story as I gave it to them, that little of other business was done. The political burzah and seat of justice had now become an alcove, where only the moral and religious laws were discussed.'

In another place Mr. Stanley is good enough to supply us with his idea of the principles by which the activity of Christian missionaries amongst inferior races should be governed or modified:

'It is strange how British philanthropists, clerical and lay, persist in the delusion that the Africans can be satisfied with spiritual improvement only. They should endeavour to impress themselves

with the undeniable fact that man, white, yellow, red, or black, has also material wants which crave to be understood and supplied. A barbarous man is a pure materialist. He is full of cravings for possessing something that he cannot describe. He is like a child which has not yet acquired the faculty of articulation. The missionary discovers the barbarian almost stupefied with brutish ignorance, with the instincts of a man in him, but yet living the life of a beast. Instead of attempting to develop the qualities of this practical human being, he instantly attempts his transformation by expounding to him the dogmas of the Christian faith, the doctrine of transubstantiation and other difficult subjects, before the barbarian has had time to articulate his necessities and to explain to him that he is a frail creature requiring to be fed with bread, and not with a stone.

My experience and study of the pagan prove to me, however, that, if the missionary can show the poor materialist that religion is allied with substantial benefits and improvement of his degraded condition, the task to which he is about to devote himself will be rendered comparatively easy. For the African once brought in contact with the European becomes docile enough: he is awed by a consciousness of his own immense inferiority, and imbued with a vague hope that he may also rise in time to the level of this superior being who has so challenged his admiration. It is the story of Caliban and Stephano over again. He comes to him with a desire to be taught, and, seized with an ambition to aspire to a higher life, becomes docile and tractable; but to his surprise he perceives himself mocked by this being who talks to him about matters that he despairs of ever understanding, and therefore, with abashed face and a still deeper sense of his inferiority, he retires to his den, cavern, or hut with a dogged determination to be contented with the brutish life he was born in.'

Mr. Stanley's propaganda, so far as the 'Emperor' Mtesa was the object of it, was ably seconded by Colonel Linant de Bellefonds, a Frenchman and Calvinist, who, as a member of the 'Gordon Pasha Expedition,' opportunely arrived at the court of Mtesa during the first sojourn there of Mr. Stanley. The latter, indeed, had repaired to Uganda in the Lady Alice—which had been built in sections at Teddington, and put together for the navigation of the Victoria Nyanza, and other operations of the expedition



which could be conducted on inland waters—with a crew of ten men, leaving Barker and Frank Pocock encamped with the rest of his following at Kagehyi, on the southern shore of Speke Gulf, the south-eastern arm of the magnificent Victoria. Mtesa had promised a fleet of canoes to bring back all the expedition to his territories, whence it was proposed to march for the exploration of the Albert Nyanza, and the determination of its exact relation to the Nile system. But the vain-glorious defection of Mtesa's admiral betrayed Mr. Stanley into the power of savages, and especially into the hands of the ruthless islanders of Bumbireh, from whom he effected a sudden splendid escape, only to find himself foodless and without oars on the lake, and the object of the mocking taunt of the Bumbireh people to 'go and die on the Nyanza.' In spite of this parting malediction, which was hereafter to be avenged in a way that to some good people has seemed too sanguinary for an amateur missionary, the Lady Alice, after several picturesque vicissitudes, found herself once more sailing along the sunlit waters of Speke Gulf, and bearing the announcement of the successful circumnavigation of the lake, one of the first great objects of the expedition. Meanwhile sickness, death, and treachery had been at work in the stationary camp. Twelve days before Mr. Stanley's return, Frederick Barker had succumbed to fever; disease of various kinds daily claimed its victims; and the expedition was in danger of robbery and extinction from the secret confederation of conspiring chiefs. At this juncture of affairs, Lukongeh, the youthful king of Ukerewé, came to the rescue; and his timely friendship gave Mr. Stanley, borne

down with fever and anxiety, the canoes he required to assume once more a northerly course over the waters of Lake Victoria.

The subjects and the neighbours of King Lukongeh are considerably devoted to the marvellous:

'The stories current in this country about the witchcraft practised by the people of Ukara Island prove that those islanders have been at pains to spread abroad a good repute for themselves, that they are cunning, and, aware that superstition is a weakness of human nature, have sought to thrive upon it. Their power—according to the Wakerewé—over the amphibie is wonderful. One Khamis, son of Hamadi, the carpenter of Sungoro, having been a long time constructing a dhow, or sailing vessel, for his employer, shared most thoroughly in these delusions.

Khamis averred, with an oath, that there was a crocodile which lived in the house of the chief of Ukara, which fed from his hands, and was as docile and obedient to his master as a dog, and as intelligent as a man. Lukongeh had once a pretty woman in his harem, who was coveted by the Ukara chief, but the latter could devise no means to possess her for a long time until he thought of his crocodile. He instantly communicated his desire to the reptile, and bade him lie in wait in the rushes near Msossi until the woman should approach the lake to bathe, as was her custom daily, and then seize and convey her without injury across the eight-mile channel to Ukara. The next day, at noon, the woman was in the Ukara chief's house.

When I expressed a doubt about the veracity of the marvellous tale, Khamis said indignantly: "What, you doubt me? Ask Lukongeh, and he will confirm what I have told you."

He then added: "Machunda, Lukongeh's father, owned a crocodile that stole an Arab's wife, and carried her across the country to the king's house!" To Khamis, and the Wangwana who listened to him, this last was conclusive evidence that the crocodiles of Ukara were most astonishing creatures.

The Wakerewé also believe that, if a hawk seizes a fish belonging to the Wakara, it is sure to die in the very act!

Kaduma of Kagehyi, according to Khamis, possessed a hippopotamus which came to him each morning, for a long period, to be milked!"

We need not stay to follow Mr. Stanley's narrative in the particulars of the stern punishment which he meted out to the



'obstinate malignity' of the assassins of Bumbireh; nor to record the war in which, on his return to Uganda, he found the Emperor Mtesa engaged for the reduction of his rebellious tributaries. It is interesting to observe, however, how, amongst the distractions of warlike preparation and conquered, but finally victorious operations, Mtesa and his courtiers listened to the spiritual teaching of Mr. Stanley, and avowed their adherence to his religion, which recommended itself as being purer in doctrine and practice than the system of Mohammed.

Mr. Stanley devotes interesting and suggestive chapters to the antiquities and the more modern annals of Uganda, together with descriptions of the life and manners of its various classes, and an approximately statistical account of the various states comprising the empire.

Early in April 1876 we find the Anglo-American Expedition *en route* to Lake Tanganika; and Mr. Stanley thus summarises the results and disappointments of nearly fifteen months of laborious wandering:

'From the 17th January 1875 up to 7th April 1876 we had been engaged in tracing the extreme southern sources of the Nile, from the marshy plains and cultivated uplands where they are born, down to the mighty reservoir called the Victoria Nyanza. We had circumnavigated the entire expanse; penetrated to every bay, inlet, and creek; become acquainted with almost every variety of wild human nature—the mild and placable, the ferocious and impracticably savage, the hospitable and the inhospitable, the generous-souled as well as the ungenerous; we had viewed their methods of war, and had witnessed them imbruing their hands in each other's blood with savage triumph and glee; we had been five times sufferers by their lust for war and murder, and had lost many men through their lawlessness and ferocity; we had travelled hundreds of miles to and fro on foot along the northern coast of the Victorian Sea, and, finally, had explored with a large force the strange countries lying between the two lakes Muta Nzige and the Victoria, and had

been permitted to gaze upon the arm of the lake named by me "Beatrice Gulf," and to drink of its sweet waters. We had then returned from farther quest in that direction, unable to find a peaceful resting-place on the lake-shores, and had struck south from the Katonga lagoon down to the Alexandra Nile, the principal affluent of the Victoria Lake, which drains nearly all the waters from the west and south-west. We had made a patient survey of over one-half of its course, and then, owing to want of the means to feed the rapacity of the churlish tribes which dwell in the vicinity of the Alexandra Nyanza, and to our reluctance to force our way against the will of the natives, opposing unnecessarily our rifles to their spears and arrows, we had been compelled, on the 7th April, to bid adieu to the lands which supply the Nile, and to turn our faces towards the Tanganika.

At noon of the 27th May the bright waters of the Tanganika broke upon the view, and compelled me to linger admiringly for a while, as I did on the day I first beheld them. By 3 p.m. we were in Ujiji. Muini Kheri, Mohammed bin Gharib, Sultan bin Kassim, and Khamis the Baluch greeted me kindly. Mohammed bin Sali was dead. Nothing was changed much, except the ever-changing mud tembés of the Arabs. The square or plaza where I met David Livingstone in November 1871 is now occupied by large tembés. The house where he and I lived has long ago been burnt down, and in its place there remain only a few embers and a hideous void. The lake expands with the same grand beauty before the eyes as we stand in the market-place. The opposite mountains of Goma have the same blue-black colour, for they are everlasting, and the Liuché river continues its course as brown as ever just east and south of Ujiji. The surf is still as restless, and the sun as bright; the sky retains its glorious azure, and the palms all their beauty; but the grand old hero, whose presence once filled Ujiji with such absorbing interest for me, was gone!

We return for a moment to Serombo, where Mr. Stanley made the peaceful acquaintance of Mirambo, the 'Mars of Africa,' the fame of whose exploits was in all the villages from Nyangwé to Zanzibar. With this redoubtable chief Mr. Stanley sealed his friendship by going through the ceremony of 'blood-brotherhood,' which was thus performed:

'Manwa Sera [chief captain of the Anglo-American Expedition] having caused us to sit fronting each other on

a straw-carpet, he made an incision in each of our right legs, from which he extracted blood, and, interchanging it, he exclaimed aloud:

"If either of you break this brotherhood now established between you, may the lion devour him, the serpent poison him, bitterness be in his food, his friends desert him, his gun burst in his hands and wound him, and everything that is bad do wrong to him until death."

#### Of Mirambo Mr. Stanley writes:

"His person quite captivated me, for he was a thorough African gentleman in appearance, very different from my conception of the terrible bandit who had struck his telling blows at native chiefs and Arabs with all the rapidity of a Frederick the Great evironed by foes.

I entered the following notes in my journal on April 22, 1876:

"This day will be memorable to me for the visit of the famous Mirambo. He was the reverse of all my conceptions of the redoubtable chieftain, and the man I had styled the 'terrible bandit.'

He is a man about 5 feet 11 inches in height, and about thirty-five years old, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh about him. A handsome, regular-featured, mild-voiced, soft-spoken man, with what one might call a 'meek' demeanour, very generous and open-handed. The character was so different from that which I had attributed to him, that for some time a suspicion clung to my mind that I was being imposed upon, but Arabs came forward who testified that this quiet-looking man was indeed Mirambo. I had expected to see something of the Mtesa type, a man whose exterior would proclaim his life and rank; but this unassuming mild-eyed man, of inoffensive meek exterior, whose action was so calm, without a gesture, presented to the eye nothing of the Napoleonic genius which he has for five years displayed in the heart of Unyamwezi, to the injury of Arabs and commerce, and the doubling of the price of ivory. I said there was *nothing*; but I must except the eyes, which had the steady calm gaze of a master.

During the conversation I had with him, he said he preferred boys or young men to accompany him to war; he never took middle-aged or old men, as they were sure to be troubled with wives or children, and did not fight half so well as young fellows who listened to his words. Said he, 'They have sharper eyes, and their young limbs enable them to move with the ease of serpents or the rapidity of zebras, and a few words will give them the hearts of lions. In all my wars with the Arabs, it was an army of youths that gave me victory, boys without beards. Fifteen of my young men died one day because I said I must have a certain red cloth that was thrown down as a challenge. No, no, give me youths for war in the open field, and men for the stockaded village.'

'What was the cause of your war, Mirambo, with the Arabs?' I asked.

'There was a good deal of cause. The Arabs got the big head' (proud), 'and there was no talking with them. Mkasiwa of Unyanyembé lost his head too, and thought I was his vassal, whereas I was not. My father was king of Uyoweh, and I was his son. What right had Mkasiwa or the Arabs to say what I ought to do? But the war is now over—the Arabs know what I can do, and Mkasiwa knows it. We will not fight any more, but we will see who can do the best trade, and who is the smartest man. Any Arab or white man who would like to pass through my country is welcome. I will give him meat and drink, and a house, and no man shall hurt him.'"

On the 5th of November 1876, Mr. Stanley left Nyangwé behind him, on the eve of penetrating into the 'dark unknown,' his task being to follow to the ocean the 'superb river,' which, known in its course by many local names, and famous in all lands as the Congo, Mr. Stanley proposes for the future to call the Livingstone.

'The object of the desperate journey is to flash a torch of light across the western half of the Dark Continent. For from Nyangwé east, along the fourth parallel of south latitude, are some 880 geographical miles, discovered, explored, and surveyed, but westward to the Atlantic Ocean along the same latitude are 956 miles—over 900 geographical miles of which are absolutely unknown. Instead, however, of striking direct west, we are about to travel north on the eastern side of the river, to prevent it bending easterly to Muta Nzigé, or Nilewards, unknown to us, and to ascertain, if the river really runs westward, what affluents flow to it from the east; and to deduce from their size and volume some idea of the extent of country which they drain, and the locality of their sources.

A thousand things may transpire to prevent the accomplishment of our purpose: hunger, disease, and savage hostility may crush us; perhaps, after all, the difficulties may daunt us; but our hopes run high, and our purpose is lofty; then in the name of God let us set on, and as He pleases, so let Him rule our destinies!

For many days and weeks the progress of the expedition was one continued series of struggles against disease, of defence against the open and the insidious attacks of jealous natives, who looked to the flesh of the expedition for







THE DESPERATE SITUATION OF ZAIDI, AND HIS RESCUE BY ULEDI, THE COXSWAIN OF THE BOAT.

[The page contains two columns of text that are extremely dark and illegible. The text appears to be a continuous narrative or list, but the characters and words cannot be discerned.]



the supply of their larders, and to the skulls of its members for the mosaic ornamentation of their village-streets or market-places; of the perilous passing or the perilous avoiding of falls, rapids, and cataracts. Throughout the descent of the Livingstone, Nature, in her river systems, her geology, her fauna and her flora, offered continual objects of splendour and surprise; but, socially speaking, the land was a chaos of cruelty and iniquity. It was a country where man was emphatically 'vile,' and only began to show symptoms of a tenderer disposition when neighbourhoods were reached that had been at once softened and appetised for gain by trading intercourse with the commercial settlements of the West.

One of the adventures incidental to Mr. Stanley's descent of the Livingstone, in which the lives of some of the most spirited of his followers were at stake during a protracted crisis, is represented in the engraving which we have the privilege of incorporating with our pages. It is by itself instinct with a vividness of peril and anxiety so intense as to be almost painful; and its interest is enhanced by the singular power of Mr. Stanley's verbal description, which, although long, it would be doing him injustice to curtail. Almost every word is necessary to the picture, and carries with it its distinct significance. It is to be premised that the expedition was making its way, in the beginning of 1877, through the unfriendly region of the Bakumu; and that these people, after being utterly disheartened by the successive punishments they had received at the hands of the expedition, left them alone to try their hands at the river, which, though dangerous, promised greater pro-

gress than on land. 'The following two days' accounts of our journey,' says Mr. Stanley, 'are extracted from my journal.'

*'January 14.*—As soon as we reached the river we began to float the canoes down a two-mile stretch of rapids to a camp opposite the south end of Ntunduru Island. Six canoes were taken safely down by the gallant boat's crew. The seventh canoe was manned by Muscati, Uledi Muscati, and Zaidi, a chief. Muscati, the steersman, lost his presence of mind, and soon upset his canoe in a piece of bad water. Muscati and his friend Uledi swam down the furious stream to Ntunduru Island, whence they were saved by the eighth canoe, manned by stout-hearted Manwa Sera and Uledi, the coxswain of the *Lady Alice*; but poor Zaidi, the chief, paralysed by the roar of the stream, unfortunately thought his safety was assured by clinging to his canoe, which was soon swept past our new camp, in full view of those who had been deputed with Frank to form it, to what seemed inevitable death. But a kindly Providence, which he has himself gratefully acknowledged, saved him even on the brink of eternity. The great fall at the north end of Ntunduru Island happens to be disparded by a single pointed rock, and on this the canoe was driven, and, borne down by the weight of the waters, was soon split in two, one side of which got jammed below, and the other was tilted upward. To this the almost drowned man clung, while perched on the rocky point, with his ankles washed by the stream. To his left, as he faced up-stream, there was a stretch of fifty yards of falling water; to his right were nearly fifty yards of leaping brown waves, while, close behind him the water fell down sheer six to eight feet, through a gap ten yards wide, between the rocky point on which he was perched and a rocky islet thirty yards long.

When called to the scene by his weeping friends, from my labours up-river, I could scarcely believe my eyes, or realise the strange chance which placed him there, and, certainly, a more critical position than the poor fellow was in cannot be imagined. The words "there is only a step between me and the grave" would have been very appropriate coming from him. But the solitary man on that narrow-pointed rock, whose knees were sometimes washed by rising waves, was apparently calmer than any of us; though we could approach him within fifty yards he could not hear a word we said; he could see us, and feel assured that we sympathised with him in his terrible position.

We then, after collecting our faculties, began to prepare means to save him. After sending men to collect rattans, we formed a cable, by which we attempted to lower a small canoe, but the instant

it seemed to reach him the force of the current hurrying to the fall was so great that the cable snapped like pack-thread, and the canoe swept by him like an arrow, and was engulfed, shattered, split, and pounded into fragments. Then we endeavoured to toss towards him poles tied to creepers, but the vagaries of the current and its convulsive heaving made it impossible to reach him with them, while the man dared not move a hand, but sat silent, watching our futile efforts, while the conviction gradually settled on our minds that his doom, though protracted, was certain.

Then, after anxious deliberation with myself, I called for another canoe, and lashed to the bow of it a cable consisting of three one-inch rattans twisted together and strengthened by all the tent-ropes. A similar cable was lashed to the side, and a third was fastened to the stern, each of these cables being ninety yards in length. A shorter cable, thirty yards long, was lashed to the stern of the canoe, which was to be guided within reach of him by a man in the canoe.

Two volunteers were called for. No one would step forward. I offered rewards. Still no one would respond. But when I began to speak to them, asking them how they would like to be in such a position without a single friend offering to assist in saving them, Uledi, the coxswain, came forward and said, "Enough, master, I will go. Mambu Kwa Mungu"—"My fate is in the hands of God"—and immediately began preparing himself, by binding his loin-cloth firmly about his waist. Then Marzouk, a boat-boy, said, "Since Uledi goes, I will go too." Other boat-boys, young Shumari and Saywa, offered their services, but I checked them, and said, "You surely are not tired of me, are you, that you all wish to die? If all my brave boat-boys are lost, what shall we do?"

Uledi and his friend Marzouk stepped into the canoe with the air of gladiators, and we applauded them heartily, but enjoined on them to be careful. Then I turned to the crowd on the shore who were manning the cables, and bade them beware of the least carelessness, as the lives of the three young men depended on their attention to the orders that would be given.

The two young volunteers were requested to paddle across river, so that the stern might be guided by those on shore. The bow and side cables were slackened until the canoe was within twenty yards of the roaring falls, and Uledi endeavoured to guide the cable to Zaidi, but the convulsive heaving of the river swept the canoe instantly to one side, where it hovered over the steep slope and brown waves of the left branch, from the swirl of which we were compelled to draw it. Five times the attempt was made, but at last, the sixth time, encouraged by the safety of the cables, we lowered the canoe until it was within ten yards of

Zaidi, and Uledi lifted the short cable and threw it over to him and struck his arm. He had just time to grasp it before he was carried over into the chasm below. For thirty seconds we saw nothing of him, and thought him lost, when his head rose above the edge of the falling waters. Instantly the word was given to "haul away," but at the first pull the bow and side cables parted, and the canoe began to glide down the left branch with my two boat-boys on board! The stern cable next parted, and, horrified at the result, we stood muttering "La il Allah, il Allah!" watching the canoe sever from us drifting to certain destruction, when we suddenly observed it halted. Zaidi in the chasm clinging to his cable was acting as a keedge-anchor, which swept the canoe against the rocky islet. Uledi and Marzouk sprang out of the canoe, and leaning over assisted Zaidi out of the falls, and the three, working with desperate energy, succeeded in securing the canoe on the islet.

But though we hurried and were exceedingly rejoiced, their position was still but a short reprieve from death. There were fifty yards of wild waves, and a resistless rush of water, between them and safety, and to the right of them was a fall 300 yards in width, and below was a mile of falls and rapids, and great whirlpools, and waves rising like little hills in the middle of the terrible stream, and below these were the fell cannibals of Wane-Mukwa and Asama.

How to reach the islet was a question which now perplexed me. We tied a stone to about a hundred yards of whipcord, and after the twentieth attempt they managed to catch it. To the end of the whipcord they tied the tent-ropes which had parted before, and drawing it to our side we tied the stout rattan creeper, which they drew across taut, and fastened to a rock, by which we thought we had begun to bridge the stream. But night drawing nigh, we said to them that we would defer further experiment until morning.

Meantime the ninth canoe, whose steersman was a supernumerary of the boat, had likewise got upset, and he out of six men was drowned, to our great regret, but the canoe was saved. All other vessels were brought down safely, but so long as my poor faithful Uledi and his friends are on the islet, and still in the arms of death, the night finds us gloomy, sorrowing, and anxious.

January 15.—My first duty this morning was to send greetings to the three brave lads on the islet, and to assure them that they should be saved before they were many hours older. Thirty men with guns were sent to protect thirty other men searching for rattans in the forest, and by nine o'clock we possessed over sixty strong canoes, besides other long climbers, and as fast as we were able to twist them together they were drawn

across by Uledi and his friends. Besides, we sent light cables to be lashed round the waist of each man, after which we felt trebly assured that all accidents were guarded against. Then hailing them I motioned to Uledi to begin, while ten men seized the cable, one end of which he had fastened round his waist. Uledi was seen to lift his hands up to heaven, and waving his hand to us he leaped into the wild flood, seizing the bridge cable as he fell into the depths. Soon he rose, hauling himself hand over hand, the waves brushing his face, and sometimes rising over his head, until it seemed as if he scarcely would be able to breathe; but by jerking his body occasionally upward with a desperate effort, he so managed to survive the waves and to approach us, where a dozen willing hands were stretched out to snatch the half-smothered man. Zaidi next followed, but after the tremendous proofs he had given of his courage and tenacious hold we did not much fear for his safety, and he also landed, to be warmly congratulated for his double escape from death. Marzouk, the youngest, was the last, and we held our breaths while the gallant boy was struggling out of the fierce grasp of death. While yet midway the pressure of water was so great that he lost his hold of two cables, at which the men screamed in terror lest he should relax his hold altogether from despair, but I shouted harshly to him. "Pull away, you fool! Be a man!" at which with three hauls he approached within reach of our willing hands, to be embraced and applauded by all. The cheers we gave were so loud and hearty that the cannibal Wane-Mukwa must have known, despite the roar of the waters, that we had passed through a great and thrilling scene.

The people of Mowa, about two hundred miles from the coast, amongst whom Mr. Stanley found himself in parts of May and June 1877, were of a very friendly temper, and 'appeared in camp by the hundred, to ponder and barter, and be amused.' But their superstition nearly provoked them to actual hostilities. Five or six hundred of these people, on the third day after the arrival of the expedition, approached the camp, shouting their war-cries, and armed with muskets. Mr. Stanley graphically relates the difficulty, and the pleasant and clever *ruse* by which it was overcome.

'When they had assembled at about a hundred yards in front of our camp,

Safeni and I walked up towards them, and sat down midway. Some half-dozen of the Mowa people came near, and the shauri began.

"What is the matter, my friends?" I asked. "Why do you come with guns in your hands in such numbers, as though you were coming to fight? Fight! Fight us, your friends! Tut! this is some great mistake, surely."

"Mundelé," replied one of them, a tall fellow with a mop-head which reminded me of Mwana Saramba, who had accompanied me round Lake Victoria—"our people saw you yesterday make marks on some tara-tara" (paper). "This is very bad. Our country will waste, our goats will die, our bananas will rot, and our women will dry up. What have we done to you, that you should wish to kill us? We have sold you food and we have brought you wine each day. Your people are allowed to wander where they please without trouble. Why is the Mundelé so wicked? We have gathered together to fight you if you do not burn that tara-tara now before our eyes. If you burn it we go away, and shall be friends as heretofore."

I told them to rest there, and left Safeni in their hands as a pledge that I should return. My tent was not fifty yards from the spot, but while going towards it my brain was busy in devising some plan to foil this superstitious madness. My note-book contained a vast number of valuable notes; plans of falls, creeks, villages, sketches of localities, ethnological and philological details, sufficient to fill two octavo volumes—everything was of general interest to the public. I could not sacrifice it to the childish caprice of savages. As I was rummaging my book box, I came across a volume of Shakespeare (Chandos edition), much worn and well thumbed, and which was of the same size as my field-book; its cover was similar also, and it might be passed for the note-book provided that no one remembered its appearance too well. I took it to them.

"Is this the tara-tara, friends, that you wish burnt?"

"Yes, yes; that is it!"

"Well, take it, and burn it or keep it."

"M—m. No, no, no. We will not touch it. It is fetish. You must burn it."

"I? Well, let it be so. I will do anything to please my good friends of Mowa."

We walked to the nearest fire. I breathed a regretful farewell to my genial companion, which during many weary hours of night had assisted to relieve my mind when oppressed by almost intolerable woes, and then gravely consigned the innocent Shakespeare to the flames, heaping the brush-fuel over it with ceremonious care.

"Ah-h-h!" breathed the poor deluded natives, sighing their relief. "The Mundelé is good—is very good. He loves his Mowa friends. There is no trouble now,

Mundélé. The Mowa people are not bad." And something approaching to a cheer was shouted among them, which terminated the episode of the burning of Shakespeare.'

On the 3d of June, Frank Pocock, the 'little master' of the expedition, and for a long time the only European companion of Mr. Stanley, fell a victim to his 'too brave' attempt to navigate the Massassa Falls.

'As I looked at the empty tent and the dejected woe-stricken servants, a choking sensation of unutterable grief filled me. The sorrow-laden mind fondly recalled the lost man's inestimable qualities, his extraordinary gentleness, his patient temper, his industry, cheerfulness, and his tender friendship; it dwelt upon the pleasure of his society, his general usefulness, his piety, and cheerful trust in our success with which he had renewed our hope and courage; and each new virtue that it remembered only served to intensify my sorrow for his loss, and to suffuse my heart with pity and regret that, after the exhibition of so many admirable qualities and such long faithful service, he should depart this life so abruptly, and without reward.

When curtained about by anxieties, and the gloom created by the almost insurmountable obstacles we encountered, his voice had ever made music in my soul. When grieving for the hapless lives that were lost, he consoled me. But now my friendly comforter and true-hearted friend was gone! Ah, had some one then but relieved me from my cares, and satisfied me that my dark followers would see their Zanjan homes again, I would that day have gladly ended the struggle, and, crying out, "Who dies earliest dies best," have embarked in my boat and dropped calmly over the cataracts into eternity.

The moon rose high above the southern wall of the chasm. Its white funeral light revealed in ghostly motion the scene of death to which I owed the sundering of a long fellowship and a firm-knit unity. Over the great Zinga Fall I sat for hours upon a warm boulder, looking up river towards the hateful Massassa, deluding myself with the vain hope that by some chance he might have escaped out of the dreadful whirlpool, picturing the horrible scene which an intense and morbid imagination called up with such reality that I half fancied that the scene was being enacted, while I was helpless to relieve.

How awful sounded the thunders of the many falls in the silent and calm night! Between distant Mowa's torrent-rush, down to Ingulufi below, the Massessé, Massassa, and Zinga filled the walled channel with their fury, while the latter, only thirty yards from me, hissed

and tore along with restless plunge and gurgle, and roaring plunged, glistering white, into a sea of billows.

Alas, alas! we never saw Frank more. Vain was the hope that by some miracle he might have escaped, for eight days afterwards a native arrived at Zinga from Kilanga, with the statement that a fisherman, while skimming Kilanga basin for whitebait, had been attracted by something gleaming on the water, and, paddling his canoe towards it, had been horrified to find it to be the upturned face of a white man.'

Early in August, Mr. Stanley's expedition, although only three days' journey from Boma, or Embomma, was in peril of starvation, owing partly to the sterility of the country, but more to the selfish *insouciance* of the people, who would not anticipate the fixed date of their next market. Sending forward messengers to Embomma, he presently found his wants bountifully ministered to by the European residents, a deputation of whom came out to meet him as far as N'safu, and thence to conduct him to Embomma.

'On the 9th August 1877, the 999th day from the date of our departure from Zanzibar, we prepared to greet the van of civilisation.

From the bare rocky ridges of N'safu, there is a perceptible decline to the Congo valley, and the country becomes in appearance more sterile—a sparse population dwelling in a mere skeleton village in the centre of bleakness. Shingly rocks strewed the path and the waste, and thin sere grass waved mournfully on level and spine, on slope of ridge and crest of hill; in the hollows it was somewhat thicker; in the bottoms it had a slight tinge of green.

We had gradually descended some five hundred feet along declining spurs, when we saw a scattered string of hammocks appearing, and gleams of startling whiteness, such as were given by fine linen and twills.

A buzz of wonder ran along our column. Proceeding a little farther, we stopped, and in a short time I was face to face with four white—ay, truly white men!

As I looked into their faces, I blushed to find that I was wondering at their paleness. Poor pagan Africans—Rwoma of Uzinja, and man-eating tribes of the Livingstone! The whole secret of their wonder and curiosity flashed upon me at once. What arrested the twanging bow and the deadly trigger of the cannibals? What but the weird pallor of myself and

Frank? In the same manner the sight of the pale faces of the Embomma merchants gave me the slightest suspicion of an involuntary shiver. The pale colour, after so long gazing on rich black and richer bronze, had something of an unaccountable ghastliness. I could not divest myself of the feeling that they must be sick; yet, as I compare their complexions to what I now view, I should say they were olive, sunburnt, dark.

Yet there was something very self-possessed about the carriage of these white men. It was grand; a little self-pride mixed with cordiality. I could not remember just then that I had witnessed such bearing among any tribe throughout Africa. They spoke well also; the words they uttered hit the sense pat; without gesture, they were perfectly intelligible. How strange! It was quite delightful to observe the slight nods of the head; the intelligent facial movements were admirably expressive. They were completely clothed, and neat also; I ought to say immaculately clean. Jaunty straw hats, coloured neckties, patent-leather boots, well-cut white clothes, virtuously clean. I looked from them to my people, and then I fear I felt almost like being grateful to the Creator that I was not as black as they, and that these finely-dressed, well-spoken whites claimed me as friend and kin. Yet I did not dare to place myself upon an equality with them as yet; the calm blue and gray eyes rather awed me, and the immaculate purity of their clothes dazzled me. I was content to suppose myself a kind of connecting link between the white and the African for the time being. Possibly familiarity would beget greater confidence.

The delight of the people on whom deliverance had dawned from the darkness of despondency was indescribable; and their enthusiasm was scarcely surpassed in its joy and delight, when a few weeks after the survivors of the expedition saluted once more their friends and relatives at Zanzibar, whither Mr. Stanley's

paternal solicitude determined him to convey them. The bare statement of such a determination must invest Mr. Stanley's name with a halo of glory beyond the conventional honours which he now began, in a brilliant series, to receive from civilised nations. If he found devotion amongst his followers, we recognise that it was because he inspired and deserved it. Further praise would be impertinence.

The romance of Mr. Stanley's travel ends with his 'gliding through the broad portal into the Atlantic Ocean,' after which he became so far an ordinary traveller that his progress was along frequented and protected routes. It is, therefore, just as he emerges from the Livingstone that we most fittingly take leave of him—which we do in the words in which he took leave of the wonderful stream hereafter to be so closely identified with his reputation, and to be known, so far as his will and purpose have weight, no longer as the Congo, but the Livingstone:

'Turning to take a farewell glance at the mighty river on whose brown bosom we had endured so greatly, I saw it approach, awed and humbled, the threshold of the watery immensity, to whose immeasurable volume and illimitable expanse, awful as had been its power, and terrible as had been its fury, its flood was but a drop. And I felt my heart suffused with purest gratitude to Him whose hand had protected us, and who had enabled us to pierce the Dark Continent from east to west, and to trace its mightiest river to its ocean bourne.

## BLUE EYES AND GOLDEN HAIR.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

BY ANNIE THOMAS (MRS. PENDER CUDLIP).

### CHAPTER VI.

'I DON'T think we'll talk about it any more to-night, aunt Bertram.'

'My dear child, not for the world will I say a word, if you're tired; but we haven't talked about it at all yet. I only want to tell you how rejoiced I am, and how satisfied I am, Daisy.'

'Well, I am neither rejoiced nor satisfied,' Daisy says, turning away impatiently from her aunt's caresses. They have come back from Lady Beaton's ball, and Miss Bertram has just heard the great news: her niece, the 'lovely Daisy Eldon,' is engaged to the catch of the season. Miss Bertram is so supremely delighted with herself for the family feeling she has displayed in having Daisy up to stay with her, that she resolves to bear and forbear unto the end, though Daisy's lukewarmness on the subject of her own success is 'very trying to her aunt.'

'I felt sure that it was settled the other day, Daisy; but you were in a teasing mood, and you wouldn't confide in me.'

'No,' Daisy says, flaming out in the distress which she herself can only partially understand. 'I was in a mean mood, aunt Bertram, and I dared not tell you how I had disappointed you; I refused Sir Bolingbroke that day because I didn't know what it was to care for any one; that's two days ago, and to-night I've accept-

ed Sir Bolingbroke (what a mouthful!) because I *do* know what it is to care for some one.'

'You have learnt to appreciate Sir Bolingbroke?' her aunt says, disregarding Daisy's remark about 'the mouthful.'

'I've done nothing of the kind. I've only learnt to appreciate myself too highly to cry for a moon that will not shine for me alone,' Daisy says, striving to speak cheerfully, and failing signally in her attempt; and Miss Bertram, with a timely remembrance of that 'singularly handsome young man' who hails from Burnsleigh, decides upon not pursuing the subject of Daisy's delusions any further this night.

The following day the report of Sir Bolingbroke Bray's approaching marriage with lovely Daisy Eldon is bruited about at all the clubs, and while it is remarked that 'it's a jolly good thing for the girl,' people still hope that he 'won't be such a brute to her' as he was to his first wife.

Simultaneously with this another marriage engagement is promulgated. The *Morning Post* and the *Court Circular* announce in their respective columns that Lord St. Briac, the eldest son of the Marquis of Beaton, will shortly lead to the hymeneal altar the beautiful and accomplished daughter and sole heiress of Robert Millard, Esq.

Daisy reads this announcement on the evening of the day after



Lady Beauton's ball—reads it hopelessly, helplessly, feeling as if all her life were going to be laid waste by a misunderstanding. She has been tricked, deceived, inveigled into promising herself to Sir Bolingbroke Bray; and now that her promise has been made public, and there is no going back for her, she finds that the heiress is to be Lady St. Briac, and that Harry Poynter is still free. Fettered, furious with the man who has misled her and whom she is going to marry, the poor child feels more miserable and desolate in these first hours of what the world regards as her triumph than she has ever felt before in her life. There can be no doubt about Miss Millard's engagement to St. Briac, for they meet Lady Beauton at an at home in the afternoon, and she verbally indorses the statement of the *Morning Post*. Still those words of the heiress's that had sealed Daisy's doom ring in Daisy's ears, puzzling and perplexing her cruelly. To what, to whom, could they have borne reference?—

'You must come to-morrow morning. I will prepare mamma for the news, and she will plead the cause we have at heart with my father; he cannot stand out against us three.'

By all the laws of common sense and reason Daisy has been justified in supposing that these words spoken, by Julia Millard to Harry Poynter, were the words of a girl discussing their love affairs with her lover. 'What other cause could her mother plead with her father that could possibly concern Harry? I must find out, though knowing the truth won't help me now; still I must find out,' she says to herself. 'The first time I see him I'll tell him what I overheard; and if he suspects the truth about me, I can't

help it. I must solve the mystery.'

She shuts her eyes to the fact that there will be danger in the course she is bent upon pursuing. She, engaged as she is to Sir Bolingbroke, will put herself very much at the mercy of this other man by betraying to him the deep desperate interest she has in any tender possibility concerning him. 'I must find out; it's too dreadful not to know something about the hidden rock on which I've been wrecked. I'll ask him right out what that girl meant, and tell him what I thought she meant; and if he puts two and two together, and guesses that what I thought drove me nearly mad, I can't help it.'

'I can't help it.' This is the phrase which is constantly on her lips now during these desperate exciting first days of her engagement. She cannot help herself, and she cannot help thinking more and more wildly and warmly of Harry, whom she has lost, she feels sure, merely through a misconception. The restless craving for fuller information on the subject nearly wears her out, and to the distress of her aunt and her future husband she flags visibly, and shows but a weary face to the world which is expecting to see her elated at her good fortune. She fancies that if she could only see Harry and 'set herself right in his eyes,' that she would grow calmer and more at peace with the prospect that is before her. Her eyes strain themselves to see him in the Row, at the Opera, and in every other place in which there is a possibility of his presence. 'If I could only see him, if I could only tell him!' This is the burden of her cry; and it galls Sir Bolingbroke to the quick to perceive that the *fiancée* he has raised, as he considers, from the

ranks, is oblivious of him before his own set. He longs to ask sometimes, when he sees her eyes roving anxiously round a room in search of some one who is not there, 'What the devil are you mooning about?' but he restrains himself; he will wait till the nuptial knot is tied; for Sir Bolingbroke Bray is far too gentlemanly a man even to swear at a lady who is not his wife. But he makes up his mind that by and by he will twist the truth out of Daisy, and if it is not altogether flattering to himself he will then punish her for having told it.

Unquestionably Daisy's manner is not flattering to the man to whom she has surrendered herself. If he cared one jot about her heart it would be more than unflattering; it would, indeed, be exquisitely painful to him. As it is, he only cares about her beauty, and that intensifies itself under the influence of the numerous conflicting emotions which paint themselves in never-ending variety of expression on her face.

'She may hark back to some old feeling, and pine in silence for some village bumpkin of a lover as much as she pleases while she continues to look as she does now—the loveliest creature into whom the breath of life has ever been breathed,' he tells himself complacently enough as he watches her attracting universal attention and admiration, and 'keeping her head' the while in a way that does credit to her breeding, as she has had no training to prepare her for it.

At length, after a few days, the tension relaxes, and that air of being perpetually on the 'look out' departs from Daisy's manner. She has had a letter from her sister Ethel, and this passage occurs in it:

'Mr. Poynter has come home at last. Both Mr. Lincoln and papa are very much vexed with him because he has insisted on inaugurating himself so quietly. How magnificent he is! I wonder you didn't lose your heart to him, for he tells us he met you accidentally in town; but, I suppose, Sir Bolingbroke is much more magnificent, and you'll be a "lady" into the bargain. What a darling aunt Bertram is! Thanks to her, we shall turn out in a most wonderful way at your wedding. Papa is saying that he wishes aunt Bertram would pay Mr. Poynter—such an old friend as he is—the compliment of asking him to the marriage-feast. He would like the attention, and it might make it pleasanter for the lot of us whose lines are cast down here.'

'Is your letter from home?' Miss Bertram asks suavely.

She has been watching her niece's changing face while the latter has been taking in the full meaning of the matter about which her young sister has gossipped. 'He' has gone home, without seeing her, without wishing her 'good-bye' or 'happiness,' and he has gone home in a state of dejection. There is balm in Gilead still.

'Yes; from Ethel,' Daisy says in answer to her aunt's question. 'Dear Ethel! I feel as if I had never made half enough of her before, and now I'm going to leave her.'

'My dear, you can do a great deal more good for her by "leaving" her, as you call it, than by staying with her,' Miss Bertram says prosaically and sensibly. 'When you're married, you can introduce your young sisters well; and if they have half your beauty, they'll succeed under such auspices as yours.'

And then Miss Bertram goes on to speak of the joy it will be to her to receive her dear sister and her dear sister's family on such a glorious occasion as this of Daisy's marriage.

'You'll think me very ungrateful,' Daisy says humbly; 'but, after all, I've been thinking I should like to go to be married at Burnsleigh.'

'Impossible!' Miss Bertram says decisively. 'You may have Ethel up here at once, if you like; but the idea of your being married at Burnsleigh is simply preposterous. Sir Bolingbroke must not see the barrenness of the land before it his interest to cultivate it a little.'

'Then, at any rate, let me go down for a week before,' Daisy pleads. 'I must see them all again while I'm their own Daisy—all their own Daisy—still. Just think, aunt Bertram, how mamma must long to have me "tell her all about it" now that I can tell it; after I'm married I shall be different, and not able to speak as I should now.'

Her heart is so set upon her scheme that her aunt is compelled to entertain it. Daisy reverts again and again to the topic.

'Let me go to them for a few days while I am all their own. When they come up to the wedding Sir Bolingbroke's claims will interfere with theirs, and they may fancy that I am estranged from them by my good fortune. Dear aunt Bertram, let me go! I have been so much to my mother, let me go and assure her that I want to be more than ever to her; let me go and make her heart glad, poor patient darling, by telling her of what I will be able to do for Ethel and the others.'

She pleads, she persists, she carries the day eventually, so far as this, that Miss Bertram accords

her permission for the brief visit to Burnsleigh to be made, provided 'Sir Bolingbroke assents.'

'I shall not care for his assent or dissent,' Daisy says. 'Till I'm his wife he has no power, and I shouldn't think he is mean enough to have the inclination to control me; and after I am his wife, even he will hardly use his authority over me to divide me from my own father and mother. It will do me good to go home for a few days, aunt Bertram. I shall get quieter; I shall realise better what I am going to do; I shall set my soul at rest, in fact.'

So it is settled, without Sir Bolingbroke's knowledge, that Daisy is to go back to the family nest for a few days, and none suspects the poor little strategist of being actuated by other than the sweetest and purest family feeling in making this move.

On the whole, Sir Bolingbroke is not altogether ill-pleased at the plan. In three weeks Daisy will be his wife, and he will be in a position to control, direct, and mould her precisely as he pleases. But just now, in the mean time, before this absolute authority is vested in his hands, Daisy is rather difficult to deal with. He does not object to her being *distracted* when he is with her alone; but it annoys him to see her so in society, when other people are keenly observant of her. He knows that it is more than hinted that the cause of her acceptance of himself was distress at the defection of another; and as he does not know who that other is, he has the feeling that he may be taken unawares at any moment should his rival reappear on the scene. For a brief time he entertains the fallacious notion of its being Lord St. Briac who has preceded him in Daisy's affections. But he is cast adrift on a

sea of doubt again by Daisy's manner of mentioning St. Briac and Miss Millard.

'That ought to be a happy marriage,' the girl says sagely; 'for she's very sensible, and he is a dear good fellow, generous and gentle, and beautifully fond of his mother.'

'Yes; St. Briac's all right enough,' Sir Bolingbroke admits. 'He was rather hard hit by you, wasn't he? And you were more than rather hard hit by him, they said.'

"They" said right for once,' Daisy replies calmly. 'I liked him so much that I wonder I didn't like him more, only—'

"Only" what, Daisy? Will you tell me that you would have liked him better if you hadn't known me? Sir Bolingbroke whispers, making an indifferent effort to play the *exigant* lover's part.

'No, I won't tell you anything of the sort,' Daisy says sturdily, impelled by she hardly knows what motive to risk the position she has gained. Sir Bolingbroke's vanity is, she has discovered, a great and greedy beast, which she has firmly resolved never to feed. Nevertheless she has pledged herself to live the remainder of her life with it. It seems to her, therefore, that the better policy for her to pursue is one that will make this same greedy beast understand from the first that it must not look for food and sustenance from her. 'I won't tell you that, for it wouldn't be true,' she says so softly that he cannot be annoyed with her.

'It would be pleasing and polite, and one wants pleasantness and politeness in society rather than truth,' Daisy, he laughs.

'Truth is the best offering I can make you; don't try to teach me to deceive you,' she says

frankly; and then she remembers what motive it is that is impelling her principally to pay this visit to Burnsleigh, and her face burns with a painful blush.

'It would take a cleverer woman than you to deceive me,' he answers carelessly. 'I'd advise you never to try to throw dust in my eyes, Daisy; because you wouldn't succeed, and I should despise you for the failure more than I should for the attempt. What has made you take this freak into your head about going down to Burnsleigh?'

He asks the question with such abrupt suddenness that she feels as if she stands convicted and condemned before him directly. For the first time she fully recognises the fact that, whatever he is or whatever he may have been, her allegiance is entirely due to him, for she has pledged her faith to him, and there has been no undue influence brought to bear upon her in order to induce her to do so. To her, at least, he has behaved straightforwardly, honourably, and well; and the fact of her not loving him does in no wise exonerate her from the onus that is on her of behaving straightforwardly, honourably, and well to him in return. The bondage is hateful to her; but she has gone into it of her own free will, and it behoves her to bear the burden her own rash haste has laid upon her as bravely and honourably as she can.

'I thought I would like to see them all once more before I married, while they could feel that I was quite their own still,' she replies, in a choking voice.

'Well, I have nothing to say against it,' he says coolly; 'only don't invite the whole parish up to stay with you next season. The friends of your youth are all very well in their proper places, but I

have no appreciation for bucolic *badinage* and *bonhomie*; therefore, if I were you, I should advise the friends of my youth to keep clear of me when they come up to the Cattle Show next year.'

She blushes now with indignation.

'You're surely not speaking of my family in that way, Sir Bolingbroke? If you are, I think I'll give myself the advice you suggest I should give them, and "keep clear of you," not only next season, but altogether.'

'Don't be huffy, dear little girl,' he laughs. 'My remarks didn't apply to your family at all. I was thinking of that untutored young savage who found himself in civilised society at Lady Beaton's, I believe, for the first time in his life, and who there distinguished himself by trying to compromise Miss Millard by his ferocious attentions.'

'O, you *are* unjust, Bolingbroke!' Daisy cries indignantly. 'Harry Poynter is as true and courteous a gentleman as any one of you; and as for having striven to "compromise" Miss Millard by his attentions, I can answer for it that she received them as if she liked them very much indeed.'

'He either did know, or he ought to have known, that Miss Millard was just engaged to St. Briac, and that therefore it was not a happy moment for him to select to lay his scalp at her feet,' Sir Bolingbroke laughs.

It is on the tip of Daisy's tongue to say that St. Briac forgot it too, as a matter of fact. But even for the sake of palliating Harry's conduct, she will not be untrue to her instincts and to the loyal silence she has resolved to observe about St. Briac. So she checks this observation, and says instead,

'He shall not be brought in

contact with you by means of me any more, I promise you that; and you, in return, promise that you won't hurt my feelings by speaking disparagingly of him to me: he's an old friend and a dear friend of mine, Bolingbroke, and—he—gave—me—my Tartar.'

Poor Daisy is so affected by the thoughts of the renunciation she has volunteered to make, that a ball rises in her throat, and her utterance is choked by sobs. She is glad that Tartar is the "motive" of the concluding sentence.

'Has anything happened to the dog?' Sir Bolingbroke asks.

He is not altogether unkind; he is only careless and worldly, and a little too much absorbed in himself to have an eye for the effect the lights and shades of his conduct may have on any one else. But he is a true Englishman and sportsman; and though he can crush all the joy of life out of a woman's heart by his cruelty, he will not be callous to her suffering about a dog.

'No; Tartar is alive and well, and just the same as ever, which is more than can be said of Tartar's mistress. I have changed my mind about going to Burnaleigh. After all I shouldn't be all their own Daisy; my head is too full of other things; and it would be harder for them to see me there as I am now than not to see me at all until there *ought* to be a change in me. They'll be up in a week or two; I'll not go down.'

She speaks very decidedly and looks at him inquiringly, expecting him to express pleasure at her change of intention. He has none to express; for Sir Bolingbroke Bray finds the part of lover a heavy one to play with the woman whom he means to make his wife. Moreover, he has a matter of business to adjust, which began

in romance and has ended in rather an unpleasantly realistic way, which demands a great deal of the time and attention which of right belongs to Daisy now. It seems to him, therefore, that Fortune is playing his cards very complacently for him when Daisy projects this visit to Burnsleigh. Accordingly, he magnanimously holds her to the fulfilment of her scheme when she, in an access of good faithful feeling towards him, proposes to back out of it. So finally it is settled that Daisy goes down to Burnsleigh, to say farewell to all her old friends, by the express desire of Sir Bolingbroke Bray. Just for one week she is to be—or to play at being—the free and happy Daisy Eldon of old times. At the expiration of that week she is to come back to the custody of her aunt, who will in turn, when a few busy days full of buying are over, deliver her up to the charge of the man who has notoriously so signally failed to take proper care of the woman who has preceded her.

Once more behold Daisy down at Burnsleigh.

‘Things have come round in such a wonderful way,’ Mrs. Granville observes, ‘that Daisy’s old friends ought to do all they can to make the last days of her residence among them happy ones.’

It is hot August weather now; but disregarding the blazing sun, Mrs. Granville broils over to the rectory and asks all the grown-up members of the Eldon family to a banquet in honour of themselves, to grace which all the brightest social lights whom she numbers among her acquaintances shall be gathered together.

‘Mr. Poynter, young Harry Poynter—I daresay you have forgotten him, Daisy; but I assure you he is worth recalling to your

memory now—he has come home since you left us, and he seems to take quite a pleasure in coming to the Court and making himself one of us.’

Mrs. Granville delivers this shot well into that poor target, Daisy; for the astute lady has heard rumours of Harry’s *rencontre* with Daisy in London, and she wishes to let Daisy see that, high as she may soar socially, Mr. Poynter is of account in his own country-side, and may fall to the lot of one of Mrs. Granville’s own uncomely daughters.

‘Do you see much of Harry?’ Daisy asks unwarily.

‘Much of him! My dear child, consider for one moment: where could he go if he didn’t come to us for social intercourse? Mary and Alice are such dear good girls that they don’t care what trouble they take to give pleasure to a fellow-creature; they won’t let him be dull and lonely—’

Pretty Ethel Eldon, Daisy’s sister, interrupts the great lady of the parish here with a laugh.

‘No; I see that they won’t let him be lonely, Mrs. Granville: I’ve seen them on the Glenholme road every day for the last week. But Mr. Poynter seems ungratefully to prefer the society of a dog to that of young ladies; he comes here every morning for Tartar to go for a run with him.’

‘Well, you’ll meet him at my house on the 8th,’ Mrs. Granville says, trying to smile unconditional approval of Harry’s line of conduct and Ethel’s mention of it. ‘I am sorry, my dear,’ she continues to Daisy, ‘that Sir Bolingbroke is not down with you; we should *much* like to have shown him that, though he *is* going to carry off the flower of Burnsleigh, we quite forgive him, and hope to become *very* much better acquainted with him



next year. Mary and Alice were saying how delightful it will be to be chaperoned by you, their old friend.'

Daisy's eyes distend as Mrs. Granville says this. Is she mad or dreaming when she fancies that the ill-bred and autocratic squires of Burnsleigh is meanly endeavouring to propitiate her—Daisy Eldon? 'And it's so foolish of her, as well as mean,' Daisy tells herself, 'to think that her civility of ten minutes is to blot out all recollection of her incivility of twenty years!'

But in spite of her vivid recollection of this incivility Daisy gives in her cordial adhesion to the plan of going to the Granville gathering. If, by any other means, she could secure a brief interview with Harry Poynter, and show him that she is his old friend, and that she does take a warm interest in him still, she would shrink from shining forth at Mrs. Granville's bidding. But there is no prospect of her doing this. Since her return to the rectory Harry Poynter has neglected Tartar, and refrained from the slightest neighbourly attention to the Eldons. Therefore, though it galls her to go to Mrs. Granville, she presses the claims of that lady's hospitality well home to her family; and as she is and always has been paramount with them, they proceed there on the day, and are received by the squires of Burnsleigh in an impressive way that is designed to touch Daisy into extending boundless advantages to the two uncomely daughters next year in town. But Daisy is oblivious both of the attention and the intention. Her eyes are wandering over the various groups that are dotted about on the lawn, and at last she sees him, and is innocently aided in seeking him by her sister Ethel.

'Look, Daisy; there's Mr. Poynter! I am going to bring him to you and make him promise to give us an otter-hunt at the Glenholme pool to-morrow or the next day—at any rate while you're here;' and before Daisy can arrest Ethel's progress the latter is walking across the lawn in the direction of Mr. Poynter, utterly regardless of the amiable and intelligent observation that is brought to bear upon her action.

Daisy stands outside the drawing-room window, on the terrace, surrounded by a cluster of people, who try to treat the once over-looked and kept-in-the-background 'parson's daughter' as if she were a portion of their private property, of which they were remarkably proud. They coo at her, and gush congratulations at her mother, and quite forget that Daisy has a memory.

Meanwhile Ethel walks, with the free and happy boldness of a kitten, right up to the spot where Harry Poynter is; and Daisy, watching them, thinks what a handsome pair they make, and tries to feel gratified at the sight. 'Little reck's she' of the emotions that flood his soul as 'Daisy's sister' addresses him.

'Mr. Poynter, why have you neglected Tartar for the last three days? Even the presence of his mistress hasn't consoled him for your defection. Did you know that my sister Daisy had come home?'

The girl asks the question in such perfectly unsuspicious good faith that he cannot diplomatise about the subject with her.

'Yes; I knew it, and that is the reason I did not come for Tartar as usual,' he says, in a low voice, turning aside with Ethel from the group as he speaks. And Daisy sees the movement, and feels that



the tone and—misunderstands the position!

'It will be Ethel, and she will be so happy, and I shall be so glad!' poor Daisy says, forcing the tears, that are so foolishly ready to fall, back from her sorrowful-looking eyes. And just then she is called upon to play lawn-tennis with some of the county potentates, for Mrs. Granville cannot glorify Daisy too much on this occasion; and so she loses sight of Harry Poynter and Ethel while she goes through the graceful gymnastics that the exigencies of the game compel her to perform.

'After all I am glad things are as they are,' tired Daisy tells herself later in the evening. 'Papa and mamma are receiving the recognition and attention they ought to have had all along, because people know now that they will never feel the grip of poverty again; and Ethel will be happy down here close to them, and I— But it doesn't matter for me.'

The heartsick words are barely said before she forgets that she ever had occasion to say them, for a voice close to her side whispers,

'Daisy, your sister tells me she knows you would like to speak to me. Can she be right?'

For answer Daisy gives him her hand, and then (blessings on the liberty of lawn-parties!) the two stroll away together.

They reach the verge of the lawn, and opposite to them, only divided from them by a narrow gravel path, there is a prettily planted little wood which has been carefully trained into the semblance of a wilderness. They both look at it fondly, but neither likes to suggest to the other the delicious impropriety of crossing over to its leafy depths. Pre-

sently a guardian angel whispers to her that it is her last chance, and that she had better take it.

'I wish we could bring one of those nice seats over here,' she says, breaking silence for the first time.

'As we can't do that, let us cross over to one of the nice seats,' he replies; and Daisy acquiesces. His next remark may appear rather unintelligible and wide of any ascertained purpose, but to Daisy it is perfectly comprehensible.

'It was an awful blow to me,' he says gently, as they sit down, 'an awful blow at first; but I feel now that it was my ignorance that led me on. Do you forgive me for not having gone with the rest of the world to wish you happiness?'

No answer comes in words from Daisy; but he sees her tremble and he hears her sigh.

'I have no right to tell you this now, any more than I had reason to hope that you were listening to me with tenderness when it was only tolerance you extended; but, Daisy, it will never do you any harm to hear now how I've loved you ever since I was a boy; how I've associated you with every hope I've ever had about Glenholme; how I've hated the hardness of the lines that kept me away from telling you this till the law granted that I had come to years of discretion; and now it's too late!'

'Is it?'

'Is it not, my sweet? Can you give up the place you'll have as Lady Bray? Dare I ask you to give it up? What turned you from me, Daisy, in that short time? What made the sweetest eyes that were ever seen lie either to Sir Bolingbroke or me that night?'

Then—led on by she knows not what impulse—she reminds

him of the words she heard Miss Millard speak to him that night; and she nearly dies with dismay at the thought of her own rashness when she learns that it was of a cast-off brother of her own, whom Harry had met and befriended in Australia, that the heiress spoke that night.

Sir Bolingbroke Bray bears the news of the breaking-off of the marriage between himself and Daisy like the lenient and charitable profligate he is.

'Poor little Daisy!' he says; 'it would have been a cruelty to take her against her will; for she would never have made a bolt from me when I became intolerable to her: she would have been too good for that; and so she would have stayed and been wretched; and the sight of a wretched woman is maddening when you've no cause to kick her out.'

He is not in the least vindictive or even seriously vexed about Daisy; and he shows that he is not either by inviting Mr. and Mrs. Harry Poynter to his wedding when he marries Miss Millard; the Beaton family having found the heiress wanting as

soon as it becomes a publicly avowed fact that she has made peace between her father and a scapegrace brother of hers, who is forthwith coming home to grasp the larger portion of the goods with which the gods have endowed the Millards.

The blue eyes and golden hair, which created such a sensation, having buried their gleam and glitter in the shades of Glenholme so happily, there is little more to be told at present about their owner.

But of Ethel this much may be gathered from Miss Bertram's parting address to society, when leaving it for a while after that 'very painful affair at Burnleigh.'

'My second niece, Ethel Eldon, will be with me next season; quite a child at present, but with such beauty in her hazel hair and brown-velvet eyes, that Daisy's quieter light will be completely put out. Happily there are no more young squires in that part of the world to interfere with Ethel's prospects, and cause me the agony of disappointment which I suffered from Daisy's foolish *mésalliance*.'

## SOME EAST ANGLIAN WORTHIES.

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PEOPLE who are exhausted by the wear and tear and worry of business, crushed under heavy burdens, feeling the lassitude which succeeds great sorrow, or who seek in any way to soothe a sore heart with the solaces of rest and quiet, combined with a little quaint life of not too exciting a nature, cannot well do better than turn their footsteps towards Normundham, a little East Anglian townlet fifty years behind the times, where they can wander free as air along the sandy dunes, watch the surf rolling in from the North Sea, or stand beside the fishermen and boys on the shore, and watch them throwing their long lines with unerring precision far into the briny depths, and drawing in fish after fish till they have half a dozen great cod lying on the shingle at either side their feet, to say nothing of smaller fry, which hardly count for anything in their estimation, though the good wives would tell you that they help to keep the pot boiling and the children fed.

The harvest of the seas which wash our Eastern coasts is particularly rich and abundant, as the Baroness Burdett-Coutts probably knew when she built Columbia Market, with rails running into it from the Great Eastern line, hoping thereby to bring vast supplies of the finny food which is prepared for man without his care or labour, which comes to his net or line fat and well nourished, from its happy hunting-grounds beneath the waves, within reach of the throngs of

weakly, starving, struggling creatures who herd together in the purlieus of Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, and Whitechapel. Why she did not succeed the smack-owners and fish-salesmen of Billingsgate can tell you, with a sly laugh, as they finish their day's money-making before civilised London turns out of its bed, and drive home in well-appointed 'traps' to the trimmest of residences to be found in any part of the suburbs. To return to Normundham and its fisher-folk, descendants of a Norse colony, as tradition says, and who bear out the truth of the story in their tall stature, blue eyes, and hair red enough for any Olaf or Ericsson who ever sailed the foaming seas or harried Christian hamlets.

You need not turn to *Bradshaw* in quest of the name, for you may search its pages through in vain, and make endless inquiries of the officials at Liverpool-street, without being able to gain the slightest modicum of intelligence about it, though it may be that some will put together first one and then another touch of Nature, and think they recognise the features of old friends who led simple lives in 'silly Suffolk' at that remote period in the Golden Age when at least for them and their contemporaries all the world was young.

In the early days of the Eastern Counties Railway, as it was then called, the line was open only as far as Bishop Stortford, and that well-appointed coach, the High-flyer, which ran between London

and Bury St. Edmund's, used to be mounted on a truck with all its freight of inside and outside passengers, and conveyed by train to the former town, where it was taken possession of by four spanking grays, and driven along the level turnpikes at a pace as nearly approaching that of King Steam as the coachman dared to attain without risking the lives of his horseflesh and the limbs of his patrons; and it was on a wild wet March evening that I first exchanged this mode of conveyance for a gig which awaited me at Bury, saw my trunks consigned to a tumbrel, and drove nine miles with a cousin I had never seen before to his house at Normundham. How pitilessly the east wind blew over the flat land, and drove the sleet in our faces, I shall never forget; nor yet, when we entered the town, how the gusts rushed up the narrow scores, bringing with them a strong odour of herrings, making toys of whatever stray bits of our apparel it could find to sport with, and almost taking sturdy Dobbin off his four substantial legs. Right glad was I when we stopped before a door near the top of the street, which was opened by an ancient serving-woman in the garb of a Quakeress, and I was taken down a long passage into an octagonal hall running the whole height of the house, with a fine oak ceiling, and doors opening in it to rooms below, while a wide staircase led to a gallery which went all round and conducted to the bedrooms above. Through one of the lower doors I was ushered into a cosy sitting-room, with a cheerful fire and well-spread supper-table, where a dignified-looking woman in rich black silk and snowy cap and kerchief rose from her chair, gave me a kindly welcome, and bade Rachel take off my wet

wraps and see to all my creature comforts. When my feet and hands were sufficiently thawed to enable me to make sure that those appendages to my person were still in their normal position, I was taken to my room, which looked somewhat eerie in the dim candlelight, and quaint enough to have been Dorothy Vernon's chamber in Haddon Hall. The uneven polished floor felt slippery to my unaccustomed feet, the great four-post bed looked hearse-like with its dark hangings, a heavy curtain fell over the tall door, and a red fire burned in a species of basket placed in the recess of a fireplace bordered with blue-and-white Dutch tiles, which immediately made me think of Dr. Watts, who is said to have precociously learned his scripture history from similar rude pictures at such another hearth.

I may as well here explain that my host, the Rev. John Joseph Cadogan, was my father's second cousin and rector of the parish of Normundham, and that he had married Ruth Gurney, a scion of one of the great Quaker families of East Anglia, and that part—a very small part—of her dower had been the curious house in which they lived, while the parsonage, an edifice consisting of five rooms and a cowhouse, was used as the abode of the infants' schoolmistress. Although Ruth had married a clergyman of the Established Church and honoured him and his calling with her whole soul, she retained her early habits, did not care to be called *Mrs.* Cadogan, adhered to the pathetic, homelike, tender *tutoyage* of her people, and their richly sober dress. Her tastes were æsthetic, and she employed her childless leisure in art: her painting-room was one of the pleasantest in the house, and her

pictures were eagerly coveted and much prized by her neighbours, to whom she gladly gave them, seeing that there was no longer any available space on her own walls where a picture could be hung. Of her artistic performances perhaps those who loved her were but partial judges; she worked very rapidly, and grew tired of her subject if it was on hand too long. She was a very absent woman, and sometimes forgot when visitors were coming; but her peculiarities were well known, and her delinquencies forgiven in consideration of her genuine goodness, cleverness, and singleness of heart. The times I liked best were those when she had ordered her household for the day, cut out and distributed her Dorcas-work, been to see her sick people, and was ready to take a stroll with me in the terraced garden gay with daffodils and polyanthuses, and interest me with her reminiscences of Elizabeth Fry, Dr. Priestley, Mr. Wilberforce, and Rowland Hill, and launch forth occasionally in praise of her beloved John Joseph. His very name pleased her because it savoured of her own family, and she made me call her Cousin Ruth, which latter, she averred, was a sweeter appellation than even the much-esteemed and time-honoured Mary.

On the first morning after my arrival I was taken all over the house, of which its owner was very proud indeed. She showed me the little chamber, which could only be reached by ascending the wide dining-room chimney, in which an ardent Jacobite was said to have been hidden for three weeks; exhibited a table in the same apartment, which must have been made where it stood, as it would have been perfectly impossible for it to be brought in by

either door or window; took me into a bedroom where Queen Elizabeth was said to have slept for a night; and asked me to take the covers off great china jars of *pot-pourri*, that the house might be filled with the odour of their contents. Then I went out to gather a bunch of violets for her work-table, and finally placed myself at a window, and was gazing down the wind-swept street, when I beheld advancing up the middle at a sober pace a rusty-looking pony-chaise, occupied by the fattest man I ever saw. He filled the solitary seat, looked rubicund and jolly, and wore what was then very uncommon—a black-stuff cassock, surmounted by a species of cloak, which left his hands free and his portly person well exposed to view.

‘Quick, cousin Ruth,’ quoth I, ‘and tell me who is this?’

‘We call him Friar Tuck,’ said she; ‘and he is sure to stay and dine, so thou wilt see how well he merits his name. He is a good man, and kind to the poor, and does not heed our little jokes.’

He drove round to the stable, was closeted for an hour or two with John Joseph in his study, and joined us when the early dinner-bell was heard.

‘Art thou ready for thy food?’ asked Ruth, in her silvery voice.

‘Yea, verily,’ he answered, falling into her manner of speech, as those did who were much with her; ‘dost thou not know of old that I am invariably hungry, and ready to eat at any hour of day or night?’

‘My dear,’ said Mr. Cadogan, ‘our friend’s troubles are great; last night’s gale blew a huge piece of thatch off the roof of his church, and the thatcher is so busy repairing similar damages that he cannot promise to get the mischief

mended before Sunday, and he knows not what to do.'

'Knows not what to do!' she repeated; 'why does he not ask us to help him? Does thee think the large tarpauling that has not been used since hay-time would cover the hole? If it will, we can send it by Joshua, and he can get a ladder and fork it down over the opening, and not a drop will go through.'

Friar Tuck expressed his grateful thanks, and told her she always knew how to assist her neighbours better than any one else, and then applied himself diligently to a plate of fat capon, which seemed the ideal dish for a man of his gastronomic capacities. In the intervals of eating he amused us very much by his vivid descriptions of a scene which had taken place at his church a few weeks previously. For months and years he had vainly endeavoured to awaken the slumbering conscience of one of his farmer's wives to the necessity of performing that portion of her weekly duty which consisted in a proper and exemplary attendance at church. She, on her part, invariably made excuse, and her stock obstacle to a due observance of the Sabbath was the need of looking after her flock of geese, though it was occasionally varied by the wants of the baby or a sick cow. However, on the Sunday in question, being wearied by the parson's importunities, she resolved to make an attempt at killing two birds with one stone by driving her geese into the churchyard, and sitting down in the porch to watch them. When the clergyman entered he was rather amazed at so unusual a mode of proceeding, and begged that she would so far leave her worldly cares behind as to come inside, observing that geese were creatures much belied,

and not nearly so silly as they seemed, and could very well take care of themselves while she sat in her pew.

'No, no,' said she; 'I can hear you well enough out here, and that will do for me.'

Seeing that she was not to be persuaded, he went on, and commenced the service. All went well during the prayers, the variety of which amused her; but soon after the commencement of the sermon her active mind was soothed to sleep, and one adventurous goose, taking advantage of her slumbers, stretched his neck out cautiously, and, meeting with no hindrance, passed by her into church. His comrades, cackling, followed, and woke Dame Perkins from her nap. Her efforts to collect her errant flock and the effect on the risible muscles of the congregation may be better imagined than described; and in the hubbub that ensued Friar Tuck was fain to cut short his address, came to the conclusion that prudence was the better part of valour, and resolved to leave Mrs. Perkins to her own devices for the future. A smaller-minded man would have been disconcerted; but he laughed merrily at his own discomfiture; and when, in his old age, Tennyson's *Northern Farmer* was published, he enjoyed it to the utmost, and told his friends that he was sure the worthy who 'stubbed Thornaby weast' must have been made of the same material as Dame Perkins.

The then bishop of the Eastern see was on terms of great intimacy with the Cadogans. Ruth was an especial favourite of his, and she delighted to do him honour, always in the spirit, and, when she did not forget it, in the letter also. On one occasion it was arranged that he should preach a

sermon for the parish schools, and drove over from his palace, which was not many miles distant, to the church, intending to walk back with us afterwards to dinner.

During service I observed that Ruth's usually placid countenance was troubled, and no sooner were we out of the church than she whispered,

'I quite forgot who was coming, and there is only our regular Sunday joint of cold beef, and it looks so dreadfully inhospitable.'

I endeavoured to reassure her by saying that the beef was always the best of its kind. But she was exceedingly dissatisfied with herself, and presently left me to walk home with John Joseph and his guest, while she went to the house of a respectable tradesman, who was one of the churchwardens. After a few minutes I saw her leave his door and proceed to another, and while I was taking off my bonnet she came to my room and said,

'I have got out of my difficulty, dear. Both those good people on whom I called have lent me their Sunday dinner. They had something else in the house to make shift with; so I shall have two hot dishes besides the cold sirloin. Is it not kind of them?'

She despatched Rachel downstairs with a message to this effect; and forthwith the bell rang, and we descended to the dining-room, where John Joseph and the bishop were already standing at the window, and comparing notes on the arrival of the summer migrants, for they were both ornithologists. And indeed that lamented prelate is to this day known to a considerable section of the world as the 'bird-bishop.'

'The cuckoo was unusually early this year,' said he, as we entered; 'I heard him first on the 7th of April at Thorpe.'

'And I saw swallows on the 13th, and a wryneck on the 24th,' rejoined Mr. Cadogan.

'On May-day I saw the first sedge warbler,' added Dr. —.

'Put up thy pocket-book and come to dinner,' broke in Ruth cheerily. 'I want to hear about the birds by and by, but we must not let our fare get cold.'

So we seated ourselves at the sociable round table, and I being in the secret awaited the uncovering of the viands with some curiosity. Judge then of my surprise and Ruth's dismay when the covers were removed, and two editions of the savoury and popular Suffolk dish familiarly known as 'a toad-in-a-hole' were exposed to view! There was nothing for it but for the hostess to confess her shortcomings and join in the laugh against herself, while Dr. — declared that it was a capital joke, for whenever he and his wife had the rare good fortune to enjoy a quiet little *tête-à-tête* dinner, he invariably stipulated that a toad-in-a-hole should be provided for the occasion. So we fell to merrily, and were soon enjoying the bishop's history of his dinner the week before at another place in his diocese, the incumbent of which had just brought home his third wife, a raw-boned Scotchwoman who was of the very straitest sect of the Pharisees with regard to Sabbath observances. She had, however, so far relaxed in honour of the bishop's presence as to add some hot soup to the cold dinner which was in her opinion the only consistent regimen for a clergyman's household on the first day of the week. This unlucky soup had been so dreadfully burnt during the cook's absence at church that it had to be sent untasted from table, and Mrs. Tibbie's *malapropos* ejaculation when the lid of the tureen was lifted, and



she smelt the mischief, was, 'The bishop's foot's in it!' Happily Dr. — was acquainted with this Scotch saying and its origin in days when episcopal intrusion was keenly felt and resented by the Covenanters, and understood that her allusion was purely impersonal, but he remembered and told it as a good story to the end of his life.

None of us, however gifted, are good at everything, and our right reverend friend, though he was a great authority on the history and habits of the birds of the air and the government of a diocese, indulged in very curious ideas on some other subjects. We next met him at an archaeological meeting, at which the much-disputed question of the origin of the round towers of England and Ireland, one of which is to be seen at Burgh, was mooted and discussed at considerable length, without any one present being able to come to a more satisfactory conclusion on the subject than before. Those who held that these extraordinary structures were remnants of an ancient fire-worship preponderated, as far as I remember, but the bishop was not one of them. He sat and pondered over what he heard, revolving all possible difficulties in the way of everybody's view, and at length came to the decision that none of the theories which had as yet been propounded would hold water. He then advanced one of his own, which, as he thought, was open to no objections, and rose triumphant over every obstacle.

'My explanation meets all difficulties,' said the good man. 'I believe those round towers to have been wells of fabulous depth, sunk in prehistoric times and bricked round with the most solid masonry; nothing like it to be seen in our days, you know. Well, the

land changes from time to time, and from various causes. In some places it slips, in others the sea recedes, and in others again it encroaches. I cannot help thinking that in these instances it has sunk, actually *sunk*, my dear sir, away from the brickwork, which now stands above the surface as a round tower, and puzzles men's minds as to its origin and purpose.'

Thus he addressed the assembled *virtuosos*, and among others my cousins, who were local authorities on such matters, and though he knew that they took an interest in what he had to say, past experience had taught him that they did not invariably agree with him on all points; but as a bishop does not every day mix with those who dare to differ from him, this added a keener zest to his conversation with them than was to be found in his ordinary intercourse with the non-episcopal world.

John Joseph tried hard to reason with him on the improbability of his case, but without success; the new idea was ultimately embodied in a paper to be read before the Society of Antiquaries on one of their Thursday evenings at Somerset House, but somehow it was overlooked and sank into oblivion before the excitement created by a great discovery. Another member had a most wonderful find of torques, rings, seals, and what Burns calls by the general name of 'auld nick-nackets,' which was turned up by a labourer while excavating for an ice-house in his shrubbery, which occupied the attention of the society till the end of the London season, to the exclusion of all other topics of interest. I did hear afterwards that this treasure-trove was wilfully kept longer than needful on the *tapis* because some of the bishop's most affectionate friends

felt that neither the world nor their right reverend brother's reputation for wisdom would suffer by the loss of the paper on the origin of round towers.

But I must revert from my cousin's friends to their household, and their faithful maid Rachel, who had been Ruth's personal attendant before her marriage, and the devoted servant of both husband and wife afterwards. The good John Joseph was gathered to his fathers after a happy wedded life of thirty years, and Rachel helped her mistress to nurse him through his long illness with a devotion which could neither be forgotten nor repaid. The time came, however, when this good and loyal creature, after nearly half a century of willing service, lost her mind, and must have been sent to a lunatic asylum if it had not been for Ruth. Her wanderings were of a most innocent kind, and showed a peculiarly guileless spirit. She could not be restrained from going to church twice every Sunday as long as her strength lasted, and behaved most decorously throughout the morning service; but when it came to afternoon prayers she invariably rose and left the building at the first words of the 'Nunc Dimittis.' 'Why do they stay?' she would say. "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace:" that is surely the time for me and all to go, when He giveth peace, His peace that passeth understanding; so I get me up and go to my dear mistress and my peaceful home.' She was much oppressed by a gentle melancholy, which was very depressing to those around; but through it all Ruth kept and tended her, had her mostly in her own sitting-room by day, and in her dressing-room at night. An attendant was near to wait upon her, and thus he journeyed daily by slow half-

conscious stages towards the Silent Land.

John Joseph had been interred in a simple grass-green grave just outside the weather-beaten chancel of his ancient church, and a similar space was reserved and marked out where his widow might lay down and sleep once more beside him; and it was in the centre between and below that she buried Rachel at her master's feet. The distance from her house to the churchyard was not great, but the infirmities of age were gaining ground, and it was too far for her to walk; so she was drawn in her wheeled chair down the street behind the coffin as chief mourner, to see the last of her faithful friend and servant.

One often hears it said that the tried old servitor whose master's interest was his own has become extinct, and been hurried out of the world by the march of education and progress; but hearts are the same in all ages, and if we would look on our domestics as brethren, put ourselves in their place, and do by them as we would be done by, we might still receive an affectionate and reasonable service at their hands, even as some of our forefathers did.

I paid cousin Ruth one more visit after the death of Rachel. Her eyesight was wonderfully good, and she still handled her brushes, and did a little painting at odd times. She was always ready to talk about her loved and lost ones, and enjoyed tolerable health, though it was impossible not to feel that the silver cord was loosening, and the King's messenger on his way. He came ere long, and for her the dawn brightened and the shadows fled. Peace to her ashes! She was the last of the trio who rest under the storm-worn chancel, with their faces towards the sunrise.

I, too, have long since toiled  
to the summit of the hill of life,  
and am making my way surely,  
if slowly, downwards; but I would  
fain visit and bid farewell to one  
and all of the old landmarks be-  
fore I reach the foot and cross the  
river. Last week I stood by the  
bird-bishop's tomb, just at that  
spot in his cathedral-floor where  
the mingled colours fall from the  
western window, gorgeous as the  
hues on a peacock's neck or the

breast of a humming-bird. Then  
I gathered daisies from the triple  
graves at Normundham, and finally  
sat and pondered by the sea, as it

'Still laughs to the rosy shells ashore,  
And the shore still shines in the lustre of  
the wave,  
Though the beauty and the joyance of  
the early days is o'er,  
And many of the beautiful are quiet in  
the grave;  
And they who come again  
Wear brows of care and pain,  
And wander, sad and silent, by the melan-  
choly main.'

E. C.

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THE MERMAIDEN.

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THEY say that a Mermaid combs her hair  
Under the wave of the western sea,  
Where the Sun sinks down to his couch at night  
Into the wave so fierce and free:  
Then the wind is hushed on the turbulent deep,  
And the waters are silent, and all things sleep.

Sailors sailing over the main,  
Over the wave of the western sea,  
Tell of a strange unearthly strain  
Floating past them dreamily:  
It sings in the shrouds; they know it well;  
But what it sings of, none may tell.

A gleam of beauty, a sound of love,  
Is seen, is heard, on the western sea;  
A radiance about the brow of Eve;  
A note of far-off minstrelsy.  
Ah, who can tell what this thing may be,  
Which is seen, which is heard, on the western sea?

The wayward waters rush and roll  
On the restless wave of the western sea;  
But no sign from above, no voice from below,  
From the depths may tell what this can be.  
I only know of the sunset-light,  
And that voices float on the wings of night.

G. M.

## ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

## No. XIII.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

[The initial, central, and final letters form three words.]

'Tis novel certainly, my first,  
And any time may be my second.  
Friends think my third among the worst  
Of human evils should be reckoned.  
If peaceful arts all fail our need  
My whole may probably succeed.

- I. My first will do;
- II. My second, too;
- III. For this my third  
Is just the word.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the December Number of *LONDON SOCIETY*. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *LONDON SOCIETY*, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by November the 11th.

## ANSWER TO No. XII. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

1. R	I	G	O	L		
2. U	M	B	R	A	G	E
3. S	P	I	N	O	Z	A
4. S	L	A	V			
5. E	Y	N	E			
6. T	A	U	R	U	S	

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Light 1. *Second Part of Henry IV.*, act iv. scene 4.  
Light 5. *Antony and Cleopatra*, act ii. scene 7.

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aces, Alma, Araba, Bon Gualtier, Cadwallader, C O M, General Buncombe, Hazlewood, Kanitbeko, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Pud, Racer, Shaitân, The Borogoves, Try, and Verulam—17 correct, and 33 incorrect: 50 in all.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Reynard.—See *Classical Dictionary* for 'Enna,' and for 'Neobule' under 'Lycambes.'

Raca, Cadwallader, and Verulam.—'Tones' is not admissible. There are hundreds of tones; no intimation was given that the meaning was limited to musical tones. The light is a catch, and a very perfect one. 'Yet' is used in its ordinary sense of 'nevertheless.' Paraphrased, the meaning is: 'These are but seven, nevertheless they were always between twelve and twenty.'

Aces.—The word 'Manna' (Hebrew) means 'What is it?' Modern manna is made from ashes, i.e. ash-trees. Magnesia does not 'come from ashes;' it can scarcely even be described as the ashes of magnesium, and does not at all answer to the words, 'And is—What is it?'